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“P^{overseer}IGSKIN” is a joyous and satirical romance about an American college President. It deals chiefly with the deeds and misdeeds of Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey and his troubles over football, since pigskin, rather than sheepskin has become the symbol of higher learning. Poor Dickey must keep everybody happy, the businessman father who thinks football is the only subject taught, the victory-demanding alumni, the millionaire of the endowment funds, the press which is always probing, making indiscreet inquiries, and even threatening; the jealous deans, the young intellectuals, and lastly the ison-like athletes themselves whom one does not know whether to shoot or pamper. A swift plot brings all the elements of this dashing story together just as the winning eleven is at the height of its season, and makes “Pigskin” a sardonic and brilliant depiction of modern university control.

PIGSKIN

PIGSKIN

BY CHARLES W. FERGUSON

AUTHOR OF
THE CONFUSION
OF TONGUES



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TO
COLLIS

PIGSKIN

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IT WAS toward autumn that the chancellorship of Martha Sumner University was suddenly declared vacant. Indeed, the declaration of vacancy was made with so little ceremony and so much clamor that the attention of a glowering public still sweaty from the pursuit of imaginary Germans turned avidly upon a new and exciting menace; the denizens of Oil City, accustomed to think of radicalism as a thing of the North and East, discovered with terror amounting to glee that the Dragon had showed its ugly head in their own bailiwick. Obviously some professional St. George had to be engaged at once, and less than a month after the rumpus began the Board of Regents, acting by the authority vested in them, had properly hired an eminently efficient dragon slayer and summoned him to buckle on his sword and come post-haste. That, in brief and in truth, is how Dr. Horace Ethelmore Dickey, a trained and pompous pachyderm of respectability, came with a suddenness that dazed him into the chancellorship of the institution.

The curious chain of events which linked the past with the election of Dr. Dickey ought here to be set down. Martha Sumner University is among those institutions which by a signal marriage with sufficient wealth have consented to change their name. In the time of its indigence and maidenhood it was simply Seaton College, so named quite generously by its founder, Nathaniel Sweeney, for the township which gave the largest amount of land for the campus and the largest amount of money for its support. It survived a dozen summers after its founding, most of them racked with drouth, and would probably have been sold to the Odd Fellows for an old people's home had it not been for the discovery of oil in that vast, barren section from which it drew its students and its sustenance. Then derricks began to lift themselves throughout the countryside, coming nearer all the time to the town of Seaton. In a single year the picture changed; a waste became a paradise, and soil which had steadily resisted the operation of man now squirted millions and showered the land in a profusion of ugly splendor. A territory once reserved

as the unwelcome sanctuary of civilized Indians and the home of lazy tenant farmers became transformed overnight into the rich and gorgeous estate of men of wealth and affairs.

In the havoc wrought by wealth it was only natural that the town of Seaton should find itself one day merely a suburb of the lurid Oil City, which had sprung up a mile or so away. It was only natural, too, that Nathaniel Sweeney, clever strategist that he was, should see that the hour had struck when he might cash in on the measly educational venture he had fostered so long. Not that his patronage in the past had been altogether in vain. Since the day when the rawboned, exhorting politician of Seaton County had harangued the Legislature into appropriating a sizable fee for the establishment of a school for struggling agriculturalists in his own district, he had seen to it that the maintenance of that school appeared to be entirely in his hands. Through a dozen years he had dragged the lifeless enterprise by the sheer force of his determination; half a dozen times his rôle of public benefactor won for him the plaudits of the voters and returned him to the Legislature, where he introduced bill upon bill looking to the improvement of the bastard of his ambition.

But oil changed everything. Judge Sweeney discovered with a wry smile that he had in the center of a community of gigantic wealth a school which could very quickly be changed into a business of the first order. Seaton College, largely because it maintained a football team which had twice beaten State and once tied Tulane, had always been regarded affectionately by the community, and its place in the popular fancy made it a property of the first order. As early as 1912 Judge Sweeney's interest in the school redoubled, and its finances got on firmer footing than they had ever been. It was not, however, until three years later that the Judge achieved the coup d'état of his career. He prevailed upon the widow of a Colonel Willard J. Sumner, an Eastern consumptive who had come West to recover his health and had remained to make his fortune in oil, to bequeath an estate of approximately eight million dollars to the institution on condition that Seaton College change its name to Martha Sumner University. The gift carried the stipulation that the trustees should be appointed by the donor and should be self-perpetuating. Mrs. Sumner, however, appointed all the nice men who had ap-

proved her gift as members of the present Board of Regents, with the result that little was changed save the name and wealth of the institution.

That is to say, little was changed but the name, wealth, and chancellor of the institution. For it turned out that Nathaniel Sweeney decided that he would like being a university president or chancellor, as he preferred; of course he had no difficulty in getting himself elected, and still less in having his salary stated as \$25,000 a year—an increase of approximately \$22,500 over his legislative stipend. A man of friends, he felt bounden to share the spoils of the new find, with the result that most of his old legislative cronies found their way into sinecures in the new university. A man who had served the state as railroad commissioner was appointed dean of the School of Law, and accepted without blushing. It was this man, Charles Edsall, who became the buddy of Chancellor Sweeney in the deprivations which followed. Together these happy rustics milked the university practically dry in the course of two boisterous years. It should be said that two new buildings were erected during the Sweeney administration, one of which was a Corinthian gymnasium in stucco, and the other a handsome structure devoted to law and containing a suite of mahogany offices for the dean and his assistants. Too, an appropriation of \$250,000 was voted for a School of Engineering, but there were never any students or any classes. The appropriation was simply given to the chancellor to be used at his discretion, and it was.

What would have happened had it not been for the World War is difficult to say. At the sound of the first drum both Sweeney and Edsall flew to the colors. The *Oil City News* carried reverberating stories and life-sized pictures of their famous heads. Chancellor Sweeney was made a major general and moved to Washington. Then the board, after a hurried audit, found that most of the Sumner fund, save that which had been nested as an endowment, had been squandered. It seemed unpatriotic to charge a major general with graft at a time of national crisis, so there was no public stir. But gradually the whisper of the scandal resounded through the halls of the city, and the public gathered its skirts to itself and let the school go hang.

II

During the war no one thought of the university except to tabulate the number of red and gold stars on its service flag. It is doubtful if all the members of the Board of Regents knew who the new chancellor was—so great was the state of lassitude and apathy into which the governing powers had fallen. He happened to be Dr. Russell Meacham, a person of competence whom the estimable Sweeney had named dean of the College of Liberal Arts quite by accident. It seemed only logical to name him acting chancellor on Sweeney's enlistment, and it seemed just as logical a month or so later to make him chancellor. Who cared? At best he was a surrogate in the interregnum.

Meacham, however, could not content himself with playing the part of a supernumerary. He fell quietly to the task of making the institution a university in fact instead of in name only. Naturally, the board did not know the difference and frowned in a businesslike way upon his efforts. He was regarded by and large as an impractical academician and the regents held his financial inability to be as grave a scandal as Sweeney's dishonesty. Those who thought about it at all thought that the time must quickly come when Meacham would be replaced by a man who combined financial shrewdness with the maximum of respectability.

It so happened that the most aggressive thinker on education just now was Simeon Hawk of Hawk, Incorporated. Just as step by step he had risen from an obscure dairyman with a mangy herd of grades to a baron of butter and eggs and cream products, with a state-wide reputation for business sagacity, so he had gradually asserted his theories of education in the sessions of the board, fortifying his position here and retrenching there, until shortly after the war he succumbed to the overtures of his fellows and consented to become chairman of the Board of Regents. He was convinced, the moment he became chairman, that affairs out at the university had reached a crisis, and that something highly spectacular ought to be done about it all at once.

Mr. Hawk saw first of all the serious, not to say vital, injury which public neglect had worked upon the university now in his charge. Undoubtedly Russell Meacham had taken advantage of the current apathy to recruit unbeknownst to the board an army

of long-haired radicals who would breed insubordination for years to come. The place was overrun, he privately and publicly suspected, with Reds. Nay, more: He had good cause to believe that Meacham and Keith, the dean of the School of Religion, had been long in the hire of the Imperial German government and that their offices had been the headquarters of espionage activity of one sort or another during the late struggle. All in all, the middle-aged cream merchant, having reached the pinnacle and having become bored with the profession of business, was able daily to run a temperature over the dangers which beset the institution of higher learning entrusted to his care.

His peculiar excitability was compounded both of the spirit of the day and his own psychology. Comparatively late in life he found himself a member of the mental constabulary, and it was more than he could comfortably stand. Very quickly his avocation, by a dexterous extension of his vocation, became the paramount concern of his life. It is true that he was eminently the founder, president, and general manager of Hawk, Incorporated. But he was also an Optimist, a devout golfer and consequently a braggart, and vice chairman of the State Wholesale Merchants and Manufacturers Association. All of these titles he had added to his name not by virtue of noble birth but by dint of efficiency and hard work during the second twenty years of his life. At the age of twenty-five, he was milking cows for the Seaton College dormitories. Out of college he went at once into clerical work, after successfully fighting the call to preach, but his health failed, and the doctor recommended that he take up life in the open. This he did on a farm not many miles from Seaton, and within a few years he was supplying a good part of the community with milk.

Then began that strange concatenation of circumstances that made him a first citizen. His business grew, largely because the town people sold their cows, but Simeon thought it was because of the singularity of his acumen. Shortly he bought another dairy, and very soon thereafter another, so that within the space of a few years he had more raw milk than he could dispose of, and it occurred to him that he might manufacture ice cream.

Having read in a journal of push that publicity was the elixir of success, he began to advertise with the slogan, "Let us freeze

your cream"; in no time he was catering to parties and in an equal space he had a monopoly on the confectionery trade of the city. Soon the public at large got the vague impression that no cows gave milk but Hawk's and that he had somehow invented ice cream.

With the discovery of oil his business trebled. The first well of any consequence in the vicinity was bored on the holdings of his first farm, and the old Hawk Dairy became one of the historic spots of the new community. Within the space of ten feverish years he found himself a man of enormous wealth and importance among the citizenry, and having conquered the known world he began to peer into a world he knew nothing of.

III

Mr. Hawk could not, of course, do the detail work of running the university; he must have a secretary on the campus. Chancellor Meacham was entirely unmanageable, and the new chairman must make what progress he could until a satisfactory head of the institution could be secured. Mr. Hawk accordingly cast about to find a suitable business manager. Among the applicants who petitioned him in response to a cryptic advertisement he inserted in *The Nation's Business*, a certain Colonel Grover C. Willingham seemed by far the most likely. He was the son of one of Hawk's boyhood friends and had finished the Harvard School of Business Administration before the declaration of war. Moreover, he was an alumnus of the class of '13 and had had a summer of training in the insurance business before he went to Harvard for his B.B.A. He had been employed as an efficiency expert for the next year in one of the plants of the Chincilla Rubber Company at Newark. The call to arms found him in a major's uniform, assigned to duty with the quartermaster's corps of the army. He was twice cited for efficiency in recognition of the speedy manner in which he moved a shipment of shoes and beans across the continent during the battle for democracy. Before it was all over he had risen to the rank of a lieutenant colonel, being one of the youngest men ever to touch that military eminence. He returned to the Chincilla Rubber Company after demobilization to find his position filled by an anemic graduate of a well-known cor-

respondence school, and in desperation returned to his native haunt to scout for a job.

A conference resulted. With the great industrialist-educator, Colonel Willingham discussed the sad state of the country in post-war days and dwelt at length on the importance of the alumni. There being no active alumni organization just then, the colonel left the office with a commission to become the organizer of the scattered sheep, and three months later he became business manager of the university and director of public relations.

Thus began a comradeship. To Simeon Hawk it was splendid to find anyone in such hearty accord as Willingham was with the solid business principles which were clearly imperative in the conduct of the university. It was most gratifying to have a Harvard graduate in business administration accept as universal truths the maxims that had made Hawk, Incorporated, a success. Arm in arm the two set about to apply the first of the industrialist's solid principles, the principle of publicity. One night Mr. Hawk took a pencil and paper and calculated that every time the university was mentioned in the daily press it was worth at least one dollar. Hence if a news story got 500,000 circulation, the net gain in the end would be half a million. Whatever the means, the school must have publicity at once, it must be brought forcibly to the attention of the constituency. Here chiefly colleges were old fashioned. . . .

It was almost in the nature of a coincidence that, while Mr. Hawk and his new assistant panted for some spectacular means of advertising the institution, an occurrence took place in an unexpected quarter which brought Martha Sumner more space on leased wires than it got by courting the press for the next ten years. The school literally blew up like a concealed mine, and the state shook from one end to the other with the detonation. When it was all over it was found that a grimy and scorched heretic had been the cause of it all.

It came about after this manner. In a neighboring city dwelt a raucous Methodist minister by the name of Pentecost who periodically reviled and revealed the wickedness of the Negro underworld, the Babylonian sins of the débutante, the machinations of the city council, and the moral flabbiness of his brothers in the Lord. In time both he and his band of zealous neurotics

tired of the old fare, and Brother Pentecost looked about for new prey. He lay stealthily in wait by the watering place of the temple until a young professor came down to drink; then he pounced, and then he had him. For about this time Professor Jackson Warren of the School of Religion at Martha Sumner brought from the press a book called *The Ethical Teachings of the Carpenter*. It was a book intended for student-discussion groups, and most of its heresies were printed in the form of questions; there were others of an affirmative sort, however, and Brother Pentecost enjoyed nothing more than mixing them up together and getting a high explosive from the compound. The man of God wrote for a review copy, marked the passages he wanted, and, clothed by the Holy Ghost, stood before his congregation one Sunday night and delivered himself of a harangue that only the study of abnormal psychology can some day explain.

He began by calling Professor Warren the modern Herod who sought to destroy the Christ. He dwelt at great and excited length upon the blasphemy implicit in calling Jesus a carpenter. Then, warming up and peeling his coat from his supple and perspiring shoulders, he proceeded to intone to the high satisfaction of a snarling crowd the shameless passages he had carefully selected.

Next morning the *Oil City News*, ever on the alert for scare-heads, came out with a story over the mild caption:

CHRIST CALLED I. W. W.
BY COLLEGE PROFESSOR

One column of the yarn was devoted to the charges which the Reverend Pentecost had hurled against the battlements of Satan the night before, and another column to alleged quotations from the book. These were appropriately boxed and ran as follows:

Jesus was crucified by the local draft committee.

. . .

If Jesus were alive to-day he would be in the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth.

. . .

The consummate sacrifice of the Carpenter lies in the fact that he died for a race of idiots, a race which would fly at each other's

throats with the bloody fangs of animals in the morning of the Twentieth Century.

. . .

Jesus was a Jew, a pacifist, a socialist.

. . .

Jesus loved harlots.

. . .

Patriotism is the antithesis of Christianity.

That young Professor Warren did not say all of these things is beside the point. The country was lashed round about as if by a mighty wind, and Mr. Hawk as chairman of the Board of Regents saw that the day had come when he must wash the crimson stains from the garment of education. The alarming fact was, however, that despite the crucial nature of the situation the chairman of the board could not enlist the least coöperation from the administration or the faculty. Chancellor Meacham sighed and said he regarded the whole affair as highly unfortunate, with the result that the *News* announced next day:

SUMNER PREXY APPROVES
WILD-HAIRED RADICALISM
IN PROF. WARREN'S BOOK

As for Professor Warren, he sat, almost crouched, in his chair at the university and lectured daily to hundreds of young men and women who cut the classes of more consecrated professors just to hear what this Christian Ingersoll had to say. When professors whose classes fell at the same hour as those of Professor Warren found their rooms abandoned, they either went to sit in on Warren's lectures or to report their grievances to Dean Keith. The dean, it was reported, staunchly supported the students and is said to have declared himself proud to have on his faculty a man who could draw students to him without the help of a schedule.

Meanwhile the seriousness of it all grew by leaps and bounds. It was impossible to measure the evil the book had wrought. Wherever citizens of the state congregated Warren was burned in effigy and Chancellor Meacham severely taken to task for sheltering a parish so blatant in the folds of Christian learning.

Colonel Willingham reported to Mr. Hawk that more than one hundred resolutions had been passed throughout the South demanding the eviction of the audacious professor. Every alumni unit the colonel had organized either chorused its protest or else went positively to pieces over the curse which had fallen upon Alma Mater.

Still Chancellor Meacham did nothing. Rapidly the keen eye of Mr. Hawk saw that he intended to do nothing, and it came to him with a sudden flash of business intuition that now was the time for action. The whole trouble rooted deeper than a young professor: it inhered in the very nature of the university's administration. Hence, when the board, or at least a quorum, assembled at Oil City in the blinding heat of July and, with socks down and collars off, met in executive session at the office of the president of Hawk, Incorporated, it was decided by a vote of eleven to two that the chancellorship of the institution was vacant and that a new and revolutionary administration must be inaugurated at once.

IV

Just what was to be the character of this new and revolutionary administration no one precisely knew; but everyone knew vaguely, and that was just as good. It was commonly agreed among patrons, regents, and alumni that the one man marked by destiny to succeed the unfortunate Meacham was Dr. Horace Ethelmore Dickey. That was a foregone conclusion even before Meacham was made an emeritus.

It is true that until lately Dr. Dickey had been a Baptist minister. But it is true also that he had always been regarded as a very scholarly minister. His brother ministers and his congregations had always felt that his dignity and poise really fitted him for some more celebrated calling, perhaps that of an educator. He himself shared this view. His appearance itself marked him for celebrity; he had discovered a very pleasing resemblance between himself and the earlier photographs of the Reverend S. Parkes Cadman, and one or two of his friends had been good enough to speak of a similarity between his granite mien and that of the late Mr. Gladstone. He was a man of commanding stature

and impressive gait who, had it not been for so great a tendency to avoirdupois, would have cut a striking figure. In a doctor's gown, which he had occasion to wear when he lectured at commencements, he got the effect he so often missed in the Protestant pulpit, that of a world dignitary who happened to be a prelate. His voice, supported by an adequate diaphragm, was like the sound of friendly thunder; it issued from deep within and it came with such resonance and solemnity that often the simplest statements in his mouth took on the sound of profound and inscrutable truth.

Indeed, Dr. Dickey was in exteriors so richly endowed by nature that either consciously or unconsciously he had spent the greater part of his life in living up to his figure. It was a scholarly mien, discovered first by himself in the cracked mirror of his room at the theological seminary, and later rediscovered in the rapt attention with which his congregations greeted him, that gave him his bent for books and his knack for uncovering spiritual truth in large nuggets. It was the sound of his own voice which made him select a vocabulary of noisy words and construct a pulpit manner of address which, by its very involutions and the droning splendor of its booming, charmed congregations of every variety.

Prior to the time when he was commandeered for the chancellorship of Martha Sumner University, he had written several books, most of which had been as widely read, if not as widely distributed, as the Gideon Bible. All were in the form of apologia. He felt it his peculiar business to justify the Christian philosophy to an alien world, and he rejoiced that he could do it on a high intellectual basis. He did not believe in evolution, and, being a scholarly man and still not believing in it, he did not see why anyone else should. One of his books was called *The Philosophical Basis of the Atonement* and another *The Mistakes of Ingersoll*; the latter had been expanded from a pamphlet he had written while convalescing from an acute attack of doubt in college. It was full of spirit, as was everything Dr. Dickey wrote on religious and moral subjects, and it was circulated widely by church authorities among those young people who had been smirched by the eloquence of the great scoffer. His latest book was called *The Efficient Christ*.

Thus it was that the doctor worried along through a successful ministerial career, his mind and heart constantly upon some more grandiloquent rôle for his talents. When an old friend of his, Stephen Buck, became dean of the School of Law, Dr. Dickey wrote to him:

Possibly the reason I congratulate you so heartily is that I envy you your new position. The fact is that I am inclined to think that I might be very much at home in a university atmosphere. The opportunities for molding young life and determining policies would challenge the best that is in me.

He hastened to add, of course, that he did not despise his present calling. It was simply that Christ Jesus

might best be served in other ways than through the pulpit. I have never doubted for one moment the authenticity of my call to the ministry of Christ. I am simply compelled perforce to be aware that the modern world offers opportunities undreamed of before. I believe that every man should be a minister, that every leader in politics and medicine and education should be first and foremost a servant of the Lord.

To others he had on other occasions intimated his willingness to enter the field of educational reform.

A not unimportant feature of the doctor's life had been his zest for politics. He had begun by putting saloons and pool halls out of the various towns in which he was pastor, and he had ended up with a rather powerful alliance between himself and Senator James Cuthbert of Tennessee. Since Senator Cuthbert's stand was always for moral righteousness, no one thought badly of the alliance; indeed, it was regarded as something of a credit to the doctor's capacity for spiritual engineering.

With the outbreak of the World War came the welcome chance for larger service. He forsook his church and went under the banner of the Young Men's Christian Association to spur the troops behind the lines. It was his function—and one which he discharged superbly—to leave no young man in doubt as to his worthiness to be sacrificed. To the boys in khaki he said: "The Hun would seduce your sisters, subvert your morals, pillage your homes, wreck your hopes, devastate your country. Reply to him

with righteous bayonet that he shall not!" For the morals of the French women he blamed the Germans, and he told the boys back from the front that it would be unpatriotic to yield to harlots so long corrupted by living on the border of a sinful Germany.

When he returned to America, covered with the dust and blood of the trenches, he was elected almost immediately to the presidency of a girls' college in Alabama. There he found things in a worse condition than he had imagined. The contact of Americans with Germans in the war, he discovered, had bred immorality wholesale; the young women of the institution were sinning with a zest and fragrance he had not before witnessed or described. He found, for instance, that a man had been employed to teach physical education, and that his classes in wrestling were literally swamped by the daughters of entirely respectable families. The instructor was of course dismissed, but the incident got some nasty publicity, and the doctor got the cue he had long awaited. He made the eloquent charge in the press that all education was corrupt and in dire need of reform and philosophical orientation.

Upon this subject he wrote and lectured voluminously. His casual letters were filled with pointed references to the Mosaic character of his destiny. His chapel talks, his addresses to this association and that, his weekly articles to the press—all took on the form of encyclicals eagerly awaited by a distraught people. Christians and godless alike clutched his great utterances to their bosoms like so many amulets and fetishes; for it was evident that the country might be demolished at any hour by some unknown catastrophe. Editors, congressmen, cyclops, and women's clubs chorused their approval as the redoubtable Dr. Dickey laid round about him with the quirt of inspired eloquence and sent Reds and Pinks scurrying to their holes.

It was only natural that the tormented regents of Martha Sumner should turn in desperation to the man who had so captured the confidence of the Republic. And it was only natural that, since the enrollment and salary were several times as large as in his present position, Dr. Dickey should take kindly to their overtures. The whole prospect excited and challenged him, and when he boarded the train for Oil City he counted the whole

journey as nothing more or less than his descent from Mt. Sinai.

Everyone, with the possible exception of a recusant faculty, appeared to be highly satisfied, and the concerted sigh of relief which went up from the homes of the middle class was almost audible. In Martha Sumner Dr. Dickey had a school white unto the harvest, and in Dr. Dickey the regents and the community had what they wanted most of all—a man of unparalleled reputation for hysterical sobriety.

TWO

WHEN Dr. Dickey stepped out onto the porch the first morning of his administration he felt smothered with responsibility. Facing toward the buildings arrayed around the horseshoe drive of the campus, his commanding stride quickened into a march, and, catching in his movements the symbol of his administration, he tightened his jaw and pulled his hat ever so slightly lower upon his forehead.

The morning papers contained the text of his inaugural, and one or two of them had ventured very fine editorial comment. By all means Warren and other insurrectionists on the faculty ought to see that he had delivered a great utterance, one which proclaimed something—albeit decorously, smoothly. There was the ring of statesmanship in it. Wilson might have uttered it, and Wilson, by the way, was a college president before he was President of the United States. . . .

Near the towering columns of Martha Sumner Hall he began to meet young men and women strolling aimlessly about. As he approached the first couple the young man said something and when the chancellor had passed the young woman laughed. He could not get the words, but he was sure he heard something about coat-tails. Of a sudden the chancellor's frame grew less taut and his jaw loosened perceptibly. Other students were gathered in groups along the walk, but all were indifferent to the powerful figure who strode by so impressively. The doctor assumed that most of these young men and women must be talking over their lessons but he got enough of one conversation to make him wonder:

"Jeeze! Didn't he sock 'im, though, that last time he came up at 'im? Jeeze! I thought he'd never come to."

"Never come to? You can't kill that damn Dutchman with anything less'n a sledgehammer. He was up cryin' around tryin' to pick a fight with Sphinx right away."

"Sphinx? *Sphinx*? Say, he'd better lay off o' that bird. Sphinx'll mob him. Why, I remember the night Sphinx . . ."

The chancellor hesitated a moment, his eyes wide with amaze-

ment. He had never heard such revolting jabber since his return from the trenches. And this on the steps of an institution of the higher learning! It was his impulse to stop and reprimand these young scoundrels severely, but dignity clutched at him with a restraining hand, and he walked on. After all, what could one expect from a school where religious and political heresies were openly fed to the students?

Less and less the roaming students noticed him. Now and then he thought he detected a hostile glance. Those who seemed conscious of his presence seemed unconscious of his identity. How strangely like an alien he felt, here in his own citadel. He remembered how as a boy he had moved to a new town and with what fear and uneasiness he had gone to school that first day. Another time he had got lost at a county fair and had wandered alone, deeply alone, in a milling crowd of merry-makers.

At the clamor of an electric bell, throngs of students began to empty out of classrooms and to press first in one direction, then in the other. Except for a few earnest young men in spectacles, the crowd moved as contentedly as a luncheon crowd on a spring day. But at one point where the hallways converged, the students coming from classes pressed forward so eagerly and the students going to classes stood their ground so stubbornly that Chancellor Dickey found himself merely a helpless log in the jam.

If observation at close range were needed to convince him that reports of moral turpitude on the campus were correct, if not understated, here was the chance. Immediately to one side, apparently not the least bit embarrassed by the crowd, stood a wanton blonde looking up into the eyes of a young giant in a monogrammed sweater; she smiled and chatted while he pinched her here and there as though conducting a medical examination. The young man's face was exceptionally open, boyish, and good-natured for one of such overbearing physique, and if there was anything shameless in his conduct with the young woman, it was the shamelessness of innocence. Even the doctor's well-trained pulpit imagination could not find the trace of a leer. Yet it was all very puzzling indeed.

"We had a swell dance, Sphinx," the girl said, shaking her bobbed head in a gesture of ecstasy.

"I'll bet you did if you were there," the giant replied with accommodating ardor. "Tommy said you were a knockout."

"Oh, Tommy was only kidding you."

"I wish I'd 'a' been there."

"Well, there'll be other times," she courted, lowering her head to an angle from which she could look up and suffer at him in the manner of her favorite movie star.

Hurrying on, the doctor shuddered as he speculated for a moment, against his will, upon the lengths to which these young people might go—probably did go. The sound of frantic giggles, faint protests, and strong supplications in the back seats of darkened automobiles assailed his ears like the sound of many sirens. With his mind's eye, he saw white thighs flash in the darkness, like swords from silken sheaths, saw pretty faces lifted in surrender, saw slender bodies entwined—until he could stand it no longer, and, seizing his moral determination, he wielded it like a whip of cords to drive these visions from him.

By the time he reached that glistening little sign, "Office of the Chancellor," his broad shoulders had begun to sag and his gait had become that of a thinker. Somewhere between the front door of his home and the front door of his office he had dropped something vital. He had come forth enthusiastic, unafraid, inspirited by the ceremonies of the day before, to assume control of an immense enterprise. Now he seemed weighted down with petty cares—important but petty—and he felt strangely depressed. A sense of loneliness enveloped him; he felt isolated and alone in a world of iniquity. This great plant which a few moments before he had owned with pride now lay desolate about him, its ruins upon his shoulders, the task of its reconstruction one for his hands to accomplish.

Within the outer office Maizie Brunt turned from her work at a steel filing cabinet to say "Good-morning" in the same flat tone she had used every day for the past two years. In the new dress she had bought for the occasion she looked more immodest if not more comely than the doctor had ever seen her look before. Maizie Brunt could never be comely. That was why, at the pointed suggestion of Mrs. Dickey, he had brought her along as his private secretary: one in public office could not be too careful of scandal in these days. Maizie would never start a rumor. She was

pathetic now, hastening about on bowed legs to show how efficiently she commanded her new position.

"Oh, Dr. Dickey," she said with an excitement nothing but the form of her sentence betrayed, "I never saw so much mail in my life. It's miles deep on your desk."

She followed him like a pet calf into the inner office and began to walk around the furniture. The chancellor placed his hat on a rack in the corner and seated himself ceremoniously behind his desk. The chair stimulated him as much as if it had contained a mild charge of electricity.

"Will we have to answer all of those?" Maizie asked.

He regarded the prohibitive stack for a moment, then said: "Certainly. You ought to know by now, I think that I make it a practice to answer courteously every letter that comes to me."

"Yes, sir, but I didn't know, now that you are getting more than ever before."

He ignored her reference to his promotion and said briefly, "I will ring when I am ready to dictate."

Miss Brunt stood hesitant. "I'll help you read them," she volunteered.

"Never mind." His tone had grown crisp. How could he tell this flat-breasted mummy that he wanted to read his important mail in private? "I must give my most important thought and attention to these letters."

She took a new tack. "Colonel Willingham has been here to see you. Shall I tell him you are in?"

"I'll see him if he calls again, but I am not to be disturbed until I notify you." A look of bewilderment clouded her face, and she went out reluctantly. The doctor knew he had hurt her, and the thought made him angry. How could anyone so dull be sensitive?

II

The first letter subpoenaed him to join the Hold Fast America League at once. Not without dignity, he cast an eye over its contents and laid it aside for one from a local firm offering him the services of expert accountants at startlingly low rates. The third letter was from an insurance agent who seemed to recall the doctor from boyhood days and with vast pleasure and intimate

detail. Relaxing somewhat from the first strain of reading a university chancellor's mail, he fingered through the stack, glancing only at the letterheads until his eye caught sight of a note written in an anxious hand. It was that note which bore in upon him with startling clearness the truth of all the convictions about educational reform that he had brought with him to his new position:

DEAR BROTHER DICKEY:

It seems like I can't find words to tell you how glad wife and I are that a man filled with the Holy Ghost is now head of our big school there. We heard you preach once down in southern Alabama and we both liked to of shouted when we learned you had been asked to be president of that school. I sure hope you can straighten things out. We've been awfully worried about our boy up there. He's just a youngster and we don't want him to get in with the wrong crowd or get any of those ideas that might make him give up Jesus Christ. Now we feel a lot better. I don't suppose you know him yet. His name's Abner Whipple. We're praying for him and for you. God bless you.

Yours in the Lord,

MR. AND MRS. FRED B. WHIPPLE.

With moistened eyes he looked at the letter. Something in it strangely warmed his heart. He must meet Abner and a thousand other Abners. What could be more important than to be official father of 3,500 boys and girls away from home in the midst of the temptations of modern life?

Here was his first administrative problem—and one he felt thoroughly competent to handle. The knowledge that he knew precisely what to do stirred him and flushed him with great pleasure. For a passing second he was dizzy with power. His mind swaggered, and his head, as if obedient, jerked decisively. Urgently he pressed the button on his desk, and Miss Brunt stretched her lanky neck through the crack in the door.

"Will you inform Dean Banks that I must see him at once? I have some administrative matters to discuss."

The last sentence embarrassed him slightly, and he was glad the woman withdrew her neck for once without questions. He could not help feeling ill at ease on the eve of his first interview

with the dean. The night before he had vaguely feared some misstep on the first day of his tenure. What if he should be attended by a committee who wanted him to select the best essay in Spanish or decide which were the worst mistakes in freshman English? But this was absurd. What had come up was a perfectly simple problem in administration. The students were underfed spiritually. This deplorable situation of course rooted in Warren's teaching; it found its breath in the whole godless atmosphere of the university. He could not meet it in a single morning, but he could take steps which would make it clear who was chancellor.

The dean was a bony man—bony and graceful in his own good way. Tall and angular, he leaped as he walked and there was an aura of the plough hand yet upon him. With his tie dangling out of his vest, his hair rumpled by much brushing with his hand, and his nose glasses set a trifle too low on his nose, he suggested the school teacher, not the professor. Indeed, it was by summer study over a long period of years that he had got his doctorate.

With practised grace he arose and extended his hand in a way he imagined chancellors should rise and extend their hands upon greeting deans. "Won't you be seated, Dean Banks?"

"Thank you, sir," the dean replied. "Are you getting settled?" he inquired amiably.

"No, to be perfectly frank, I am getting greatly unsettled," the chancellor retorted with one of his winning smiles.

"Perhaps I can help you," suggested the dean. He showed some concern and apparently missed the doctor's wit, so that the administration thought it best to plunge at once into business.

"There are several matters of great importance," the chancellor began. "Of very great importance," he repeated solemnly. He was sure Dean Banks understood even better than he the highly questionable state of the university's moral atmosphere just now. There was, of course, nothing so essential as the immediate purification of that atmosphere, and Dean Banks could appreciate the fact that the new administration's first efforts must be directed toward the accomplishment of this primary task.

"Now in this I shall have to solicit your earnest coöperation," the new administration continued. "What provision, if any, is now made for the attendance of the students upon divine service both within and without the university?"

Dean Banks replied with the air of a student who knew but just couldn't say. There was a rule to the effect that students must attend church once on Sunday and chapel twice a week, but the rule hadn't been enforced for years—at least, not effectively. There was a look of diffidence and guilt on his face as he explained this laxity.

"I suspected as much," the chancellor nodded. "I see that we have totally neglected the worship aspect of our teaching programme. I want you to know, sir, that I regard nothing, absolutely nothing in the curriculum as any more important than the religious training of the students."

"I am entirely in accord with you, Chancellor Dickey. Of course, the truth is that Dr. Meacham never paid any attention to these things, and I never felt much like enforcing the regulation when the whole system had been allowed to fall into—well, we might say—decay. But I can see now I've been in error."

"No, not at all," the doctor assured him hastily. "It has not been your fault. It is sufficient to say that from here on we must have machinery for the strict enforcement of the rule. Who, by the way, has been conducting these exercises?"

"Why, Dean Keith is supposed to."

"I see. Yes. Well, no wonder, then. We must make these services important." He paused here long enough to show his displeasure with the Keith chaplaincy and continued: "Now there is another matter—or perhaps it is the same one. I was shocked beyond words at what I was subjected to in the halls of the institution this morning. We ought to have a rule which forbids smoking in the halls. And I think I shall have something to say of profanity later. I hope you will have the discipline committee—I suppose there is one—take these matters under advisement. Really, Dean Banks, I regard them as highly important. . . ." He dismissed the dean with a firm handclasp which should more than compensate for any undue briskness he had shown.

III

So Keith was holding chapel, was he? Well, now was as good a time as any to let Keith and the other insurgents on the faculty know exactly where he stood. He summoned Miss Brunt with a

firm press of the buzzer. "Take this note to Dean Keith of the School of Religion:

"I find that the duties of university chaplain have hitherto devolved upon you as dean of the School of Religion. I do not know why this should be. Your work is surely excessive without this additional duty, and I have decided to relieve you of the chaplaincy and constitute that position an independent and extensive office of the institution. I am sure you agree with me when I say that the work of the chaplain is undoubtedly important enough to command a full-time man. Indeed, I am greatly surprised to know that it is not already such.' New paragraph. 'Hence, I am writing to ask that you recommend at once a thoroughly reliable and spiritual member of your department whose duties are sufficiently light to enable him to serve in the capacity of Acting Chaplain' (capitals) 'until I have been able to secure the services of some outstanding leader in the inspirational work of the Church for the position. It may interest you to know that—' (new paragraph back there before 'it may')—'I have asked that the university regulation requiring chapel attendance be revived and strenuously enforced. This, as you see, will make greater demands upon us than the previous system. I am sure you appreciate the importance of this action and that I may rely upon you for your fullest coöperation. Believe me most sincerely yours, Horace Ethelmore Dickey, Chancellor.' "

The letter had rolled forth with the fluency of a public prayer. And no state document could have been more tactful, more diplomatic, and at the same time more decisive in its inferences. He asked Maizie to read it back to him, but she always shied and stumbled like an old mare when she read her notes, and he halted her before she was half through. Certainly this woman was no echo for his eloquence.

Since he had Maizie with him it would be just as well to attend to other matters. Colonel Willingham, as director of public relations, should be notified of what had been done. It would be of immense interest to the public at large to learn that he had begun at once to set his house in order. So he began:

"Memorandum to Colonel Willingham: 'It will inter——' "

"He's been in to see you," Maizie interrupted. "Don't you remember I told you?"

"Well?" He devoured her with a glance.

"I just thought maybe you wouldn't write him if you knew," she added timidly, coloring at the knowledge of having said the wrong thing.

"Now begin again: 'It will interest you to know that I have to-day instructed Dean Oscar Banks to require every student of the university to attend religious services in the chapel twice a week, to take effect at once. I regard nothing as quite so important as that the students of this institution be given every religious advantage possible.' New paragraph. 'I have also asked Dean Keith of the School of Religion to appoint'—no—'recommend for appointment, an Acting Chaplain, pending the appointment of a full-time Chaplain for the university. This appointment will be made within the next few weeks.' Last paragraph. 'You will' comma 'I am sure' comma 'appreciate the significance of this step' comma 'which is' comma 'by the way' comma 'my first official act.'"

He thought of drafting an official statement covering the point and of enclosing a copy with the memo; but this seemed to him, even in the first wave of his feeling of executive importance, a bit superfluous. What was most consoling was the fact that he had already acted; he had taken the first great step in a march of triumph. With a wave of the hand almost jovial he swept Maizie out of the office and slumped comfortably in his chair to reflect upon what he had wrought. While his first official act had been the least bit indirect, it had important inferences and it would serve to show the first tenet in his programme of educational reform: The university could not exist half-Dickey and half-Warren. The young heretic must be fed to the lions at once.

THREE

COLONEL WILLINGHAM threatened to be beefy in build. Adequate feet and legs gave him the appearance of a celluloid roly-poly with lead in its bottom, but he carried himself erectly, from a habit formed in the Army, and dressed with such skill that his rounded stomach and hips seemed simply to be filling out the natural lines of a fine physique. With his clothes he created an illusion of form just as he got the effect of a wise and understanding countenance with the great horn rims of his spectacles. His ears and mouth were symbolically large, the latter organ being somewhat twisted from a habit he had of talking out of one side of it. He wore an indistinct mustache—the kind that had caused second lieutenants to be called shave-tails during the war; it was the color of wet straw on most occasions and, in certain kinds of light, malignantly red.

Not until midafternoon was the chancellor able to see his assistant. Near noon he had suddenly found himself buried beneath an avalanche of congratulations from wealthy patrons. These came by telegraph and telephone, and quite a number of local friends had the happy thought of saying it with flowers. The result was that the chancellor's office resembled a bier when the business manager, accompanied by Simeon Hawk, perspiring as always, came in to see him.

"Gentlemen," said the doctor.

"Well, well," said Mr. Hawk.

"Hum, hum," said Colonel Willingham.

"Shows which way the wind's blowing," resumed Mr. Hawk, smacking his lips over the flowers and mopping his brow with a clean handkerchief and a soiled one he had dragged out by accident. He gave the impression of a man who would have liked to appear sleek and urbane, but in view of the difficulties had decided that the next best thing was to appear ruddy and energetic. His grooming was careful and his dress always unapproachable in the mornings; when he first got to the office he resembled one of those successful men one sees at the top of the scale in correspondence-course advertisements. By the middle of the day,

however, in winter as well as in summer, his collar had wilted like a morning glory, and the twitching energy of the man had wrecked his whole appearance. Nothing remained intact but the brittle mustache which gave his mouth such a fine executive twist.

"It shows what the world thinks of your election," Colonel Willingham chanted antiphonally.

"Do you really think so?" The doctor seemed teased, and he glanced furtively at the flowers.

They assured him in emphatic gutturals that the evidence was unmistakable, and Mr. Hawk started roaming about the office, inspecting first the cards attached to each wreath and then smelling tentatively at the collection. He was apparently satisfied with the inscriptions, and when he had finished he inhaled deeply of the funereal odor that filled the room.

"It's too bad flowers make you think of death, isn't it?" he challenged. "There ought to be a law against their use at funerals. But then——" He saw the economic implications and left off like a philosopher.

"Won't you gentlemen be seated?" the chancellor invited.

Colonel Willingham sidled over to a chair, as though reluctant.

"No," Mr. Hawk said decisively. "What we'll do is this: We'll go out to the field and watch the boys practise. Anything we have to do can be done there. I'm a great hand for conducting business in the open."

"We've got a great bunch out there this year," the colonel supplemented. "Great bunch of boys. All of them manly and upstanding."

The chancellor looked very thoughtful for a moment. It was obvious that the showers of congratulations had left him in a state approaching hilarity, and watching the squad practise was nothing short of a lark. Nor did he have to be reminded of what Mr. Hawk was about to point out:

"It's the best and only way to the real heart of the student body."

"Yes, I know," the doctor replied. "I'd be delighted." Something in the offhand manner of the two men made him grow boisterously confidential. "I gave Keith his walking papers to-day," he said with a twinkle, and when he saw the look of evident satisfaction cross the faces of Willingham and Hawk, he wished

that what he said had been true. "Not really, that is. I relieved him of chapel. That's the beginning, I dare say."

"I'm mighty glad you made a start like that, Dr. Dickey." Colonel Willingham tossed one leg over the chancellor's desk and slapped his thigh gently.

Mr. Hawk bristled at the scent of battle. "That's it, Dickey. Show 'em you mean business from the start. I knew you'd do it." He had grown excited, and he looked about nervously and suspiciously as if to lay hands on some conveniently obstreperous member of the faculty.

"You've got to have a bunch of deans you can depend on absolutely," Colonel Willingham commented sagely. With maidenly reluctance he hesitated a moment as though waiting to have certain facts drawn from him, then continued with a nervous little cough: "I hope you don't mind me saying so, but I'm not so sure the other ones you've got now are all reliable, and all that, you know. Take old Dean Easton, just for an example. He's dean of the Graduate School. Old Daddy Easton is going to do everything he can to put your administration in a bad light from the word Go. He's a sorehead."

"*Sorehead*," Mr. Hawk repeated with a savage emphasis that called up visions of diseased poultry. "I've seen his kind often enough."

"Nobody likes him much, not even his cronies," the business manager and director of public relations went on. "He says he thinks Meacham made this a real university. Well, that just shows you what kind of a fellow he is. Meacham let him run things. He's always run things. He's been academic daddy of this institution for two years now, and he can't bear giving it up. So that's how it all is. He and Farrell and Sedberry and McKnight and Keith know they can't run the school now that we've got you. So they're sore and they're trying to make trouble. Keith says he's going to stand by Warren if you try to put him out."

The chancellor bridled perceptibly. "He said that? Who to?"

"Oh, everybody knows *his* attitude toward your administration," Colonel Willingham replied with a gesture that took in one hundred and fifty members of the faculty. "It's common knowledge that he's behind Warren in all this commotion. Common

knowledge." He locked his pudgy hands across his paunch and sighed forlornly. "You see, we've got a very grave sichuashun here, Dr. Dickey,"

Mr. Hawk was getting impatient. "Dickey'll handle 'em, Grover," he said, sucking wind through his teeth like a well-fed policeman. "Let's get on out to the field. We can transact our business on the run. Nothing like the open for doing business in."

II

The three of them walked together out across the unimpressive landscape of the campus. There was some difficulty in keeping step, Mr. Hawk pausing occasionally for his companions to catch up and smacking his fist against his open hand to compensate for the loss of effort. He chattered like a small boy on his first hike, though a recent sketch in *The Manufacturers' News* had referred to him as "the Silent Executive."

"Dickey, we're going to show you something now that will make you open your eyes," he confided. "We've got the makings out here of the swellest football team in the South.

"Absolutely," he went on a moment later, as though waiting for the echo of his last proclamation. "The makings, I say. I don't suppose anybody knows what this bunch will be worth to the school in good old dollars and cents if we can just get 'em going right and keep 'em that way."

An official-looking freshman squinted through the peephole as Mr. Hawk pounded on the gate, and seeing his distinguished visitors opened it hurriedly and with ado.

"They don't let just anybody in," Mr. Hawk explained. "You never know when T. C. U. or Belton or Tate will be sending over some fellow to watch us practise. That's why they don't admit the riffraff."

They settled down on the uncomfortable boards of the grandstand, after both the business manager and the chairman of the board had offered due apologies for the long rows of wooden seats.

"A first-rate stadium is one of the things we need most," Mr. Hawk moaned, but he was soon lost in the spectacle before him,

the sight of leaping players, balls hurled about in apparent confusion, diving tacklers, agonizing punters, and all the circus which made him feel gloriously like a Roman emperor.

"Now you're seeing a real aggregation," he said to the chancellor, placing his hand on the doctor's knee and italicizing his words with carefully measured pats.

"We've got a mighty lively bunch out there," the business manager put in with a tone of proprietorship which the chancellor resented and envied. A stark figure broke loose from the rest and scurried down the sidelines to take a long pass. "That's Tommy Orr!" Colonel Willingham shouted with the same zest he might have shouted, *There's General Foch!* "Look at that fellow's speed. Look at his form. I tell you, he's one of the prettiest players I ever saw on the gridiron."

"Isn't he great!" Mr. Hawk exclaimed gleefully, squirming perilously on the splintery boards. "Sol Isaacs ought to have an LL.D. for keeping that boy in school."

He laughed uproariously at his jest and Colonel Willingham joined in. "You see," the colonel explained to Chancellor Dickey, who appeared a trifle puzzled, "Isaacs helps a number of deserving boys through the institution. Tommy just happens to be one of them. No money, and all that. But he turned out to be a great player."

"Sol's a great philanthropist," Mr. Hawk reflected, half to himself. "He's done a lot of good, even if he is a Jew."

By now the scrimmage had begun, and the movements of it held the doctor fascinated. He had seen only occasional games of football and had come to regard the sport as dangerous. This feeling he regarded now as exceedingly old-fashioned.

"Nothing finer for building character than football," Colonel Willingham commented.

"Yes, that's true," the chancellor replied, rather shortly and emphatically, as though he had known it all along and embodied the principle in his programme of educational reform. Just then a giant got through the line with a speed that seemed incredible for one of his size and skirted the backs and the safety before they quite knew what it was all about. "Who's that?" the doctor asked breathlessly.

"That?" Colonel Willingham leaned back and took a cigar from

his pocket. "That," he said deliberately, "is Sphinx Harmon, the best full back that ever put on moleskins. I never saw a greater player, Doctor. Nor a cleaner man," he added quickly.

"The lad's had a hard time, though," Mr. Hawk said very sadly. "All the pros have got it in for him just because he's a good athlete. They're all down on him and always trying to bust him out."

"There's no doubt about it," supplemented Colonel Willingham authoritatively. "You see, his father's a blacksmith, and his mother's dead. He's been thrown with a rough sort and a lot of these holier-than-thou fellows around here are out to get him. But he's a great fellow. You watch him."

The chancellor watched him. He seemed entirely lacking in football zest, and he did not grit his teeth and snarl before each play in the manner of the other warriors. For the most part he did not even squat into position. Yet the remarkable physique and agility of the man seemed to carry him triumphantly over every play, and nothing could efface his grin. In the sheer acrobatics of the game he was a marvel to behold.

"He was the star full back of the A. E. F.," Mr. Hawk said in a burst of civic pride. "Played with the Thirty-sixth Division when he was just out of high school. Every school in the country tried to get hold of him."

The doctor studied the man with admiration. "What did you say they called him?"

"Sphinx," Colonel Willingham laughed. "Some name, eh? Some bookworm made it up because he looks so much like the Egyptian Sphinx once in a while."

The doctor said he thought it all was extremely interesting, and Mr. Hawk and Colonel Willingham agreed heartily that it was. The three stared transfixed at the mock battle of the squads, Colonel Willingham rolling his cigar like a barrel from one side of his mouth to the other, the chancellor fixing his thumbs in his vest and shifting his weight instinctively from one buttock to the other, and Mr. Hawk clenching his fists tightly and punching his companions when a particularly spectacular play came through. In time there came a lull in the practice, and the business manager proposed that they go down and meet the boys. They made their way out of the stand and onto the carefully preserved

turf, the doctor following slowly and stepping with a care which betrayed his uneasiness.

"I'll introduce you to the coach," the business manager confided. "He's not much, though."

"Poor old Bud Wilson," Mr. Hawk appraised. "Too old, I suppose. Not enough pep."

"Then I'm not sure he's a good moral influence on the fellows, either," Colonel Willingham concluded. Evidently the colonel kept an eye on the moral aspect of it all, and that was very important. They approached the squad assembled in mid-field. Some of the men were lying about, some were standing lazily and at rest with their arms about each other's shoulders, and in the center of the group Bud Wilson was delivering a harangue to a dimpled youth who looked terribly incongruous in the lumpy uniform he wore. It was all like the pictures of a fight between wolves, with the pack standing gravely about waiting its cue to fall upon and devour the one who was beaten. Except that the dimpled lad was no part of a wolf. He trembled and looked fearfully about as the coach attacked him.

"You've got no guts, Cameron," Bud Wilson told him. "Throw yourself into it. That's the best way not to get hurt. Here, you, Tompkins. Run past. Cameron, you drop him as he comes by. You gotta learn to dump interference if you expect to be end on my team. All right, Tommy."

Tommy, a brawny yokel, dug his toes into the sod and started for young Cameron. Cameron, to one side, made a feeble start and as the runner approached him threw himself in Tompkins's general direction.

"No! No! Hell, no!" the coach shouted. "That'll do, Cameron. You'd better take up golf." Cameron picked himself up sadly, but he walked off with a sprightly tread which showed that he was satisfied to be alive. "Sphinx! Here! You're no end, but drop Tommy. Show 'em how it's done."

"At 'em, Heavy," someone said.

"The Hero of Verdun."

"Don't get hurt, little boy."

Sphinx grinned and hitched his trousers in a preparatory gesture, then his grin gave way to a grimace of resignation and, for a fleeting moment, he resembled the huge rock face of the

Egyptian Sphinx. His look seemed to say, *Get hard for these bozos a minute, and then it'll all be over.*

What a moment before had been a senseless pantomime now became a miniature battle for life. Tompkins came by with the speed of a pile driver. Sphinx crouched, grinned once more, then leaped square at the pounding knees. Tommy rolled over five feet from the point where Sphinx met him.

"Now you're working," the coach shouted. "That's something like. All right, Steve, you try it. You boys have got to get this down."

No one paid the slightest attention to the civilian triumvirate, save one man in a strange-colored sweater who came to join them at Colonel Willingham's beck. "Dr. Dickey, I want you to meet our expert trainer, Dr. Leveridge. It's his business to keep the boys in good physical shape."

"I'm so glad to know you, Dr. Leveridge," the chancellor boomed cordially. The sound of his great voice caused several of the men to turn and look at him. "You've got a big job. Looks like a hard one from all I can see."

"Not so bad," said the trainer. "Just a matter of making 'em keep temperate and keep in training. They're good boys, though. A lively bunch."

"No smoking or anything like that allowed?" the chancellor inquired.

"Oh, no. Goodness, no." The trainer seemed horrified at the thought.

"Seems like splendid moral discipline."

"Great discipline," chimed in Mr. Hawk.

"Finest discipline I know anything about," Colonel Willingham agreed, flicking the ashes from his cigar.

III

Doc Leveridge seemed little disposed to talk. Indeed, he seemed already to have said everything he thought. The three then resumed watching the practice at close range, with Colonel Willingham, supported in the bass by the ever-ready Mr. Hawk, explaining everything significant. The doctor heard the coach say "Hell" twice more, and he realized, too, that Sphinx was the

young man he had seen petting the wanton blonde in the hall that morning. But he showed no outward sign of consternation.

With three squads running signals and with the remainder of the warriors either punting or running around the track, the coach seemed free at last. Colonel Willingham called him and introduced him to the new chancellor, but Bud Wilson merely shook hands and chased off to offer some pointer to one of his quarter backs.

"Not much," the colonel sighed. "Really not much."

"He doesn't know how to meet people," Mr. Hawk said with such finality that one would suppose a pleasant address the first requisite of a good coach.

The doctor shook his head gravely, and it was evident that he was thinking about what the two had told him of the coach's moral influence and of the three "Hells" he had heard.

"I want you to shake hands with Sphinx," said the business manager. "He's the most important man on the campus." Then he laughed, just to show the doctor he was only joking.

Sphinx had separated himself from one of the squads, and, apparently exempt from the chore of running around the track, came toward them as Willingham beckoned. He was a man of extraordinary stature, and with his unruly brown hair tousled from scrimmage and his face sweaty and dirty, he resembled at a distance a war cartoon of a German soldier in Belgium. At close range, however, he took on a decidedly more benign appearance, and by the time he stood grinning before the three there was, except for the gorilla arms which dangled to his knees, nothing the least bit unhuman about him. That grin broke through the fearfulness of his mien like a ray of sunshine through a thundercloud. He spoke with an indolent Southern drawl and in a tone of such musical quality as to seem highly incongruous; it was as though a buffalo had chirped and yodeled.

"The pleasure is all mine, Doctor," he said, bowing and holding his grimy hands behind him.

"I assure you it is mutual." The doctor took his cue as though he too had taken part in the rehearsal.

"No, it isn't," Sphinx said with a sudden burst of originality. "I've been wanting to meet you ever since I heard you were com-

ing. Colonel Willingham says some awfully fine things about you."

"Oh, is that so?" The chancellor tried to seem surprised.

"Dickey will be your friend, Harmon," Mr. Hawk put in. He slapped Sphinx on the back in the manner of a small boy striking his grown brother upon invitation and with the assurance that no harm could come of it. "We're all for you," he added jubilantly, and slapped Sphinx again.

"Well, I'll see you some more," Sphinx said and trotted off.

The three watched his lumbering gait as he moved toward the gym.

"Not a bad sort," the doctor commented.

"Great fellow," the colonel agreed. "Rough and all that. Mother's dead and everybody down on him. But a great fellow."

"Never had an opportunity," Mr. Hawk said gravely. "Just a diamond in the rough. It's up to us to bring him out. And there's nothing like education for bringing him out, either." He looked around belligerently, as if he expected someone to deny the truth of this.

"That's our purpose," said the chancellor. "We're here to build character and build it strong."

"Nothing like football for building character."

Mr. Hawk said that, but Colonel Willingham repeated it.

FOUR

THE next two days the doctor spent in writing letters. It would take a day or so to thank important citizens for their letters of congratulation, and by the end of that time their letters thanking him for thanking them would begin pouring in. Maizie Brunt panted in and out, heroic for a day at the thought of being overworked, then settling down, resigned and sweaty as a hunk in a steel mill.

It was toward noon of the third day when Maizie handed him a note from Dean Keith of the School of Religion:

MY DEAR CHANCELLOR DICKEY:

I have your note regarding the new policy of compulsory chapel attendance, which, I take it, is surely to include only undergraduates. It seems to me a most expedient move.

Since you have relieved me of the position, I see nothing to do but to comply with your request that I name a person who will serve as Acting Chaplain until you can find someone more acceptable.

This I am glad to do. I recommend one who has the attention of the students as no professor of religion has ever had it, Professor Jackson Warren. He would do a great work. I have consulted him to ascertain his willingness. He will serve and the university is to be congratulated.

Yours truly,
REGINALD KEITH.

Twice the chancellor scanned the letter, unable for a moment to comprehend the full extent of its insolence. Then as he laid the letter back on his desk he experienced a pleasant tightening of nerves and a mild sense of excitement. It was as though he had been guarding a treasure vigilantly and someone had slipped up from behind to press the point of a dagger against his ribs. He had been prepared and waiting, yet the presence of so bold an intruder left him with the feeling that he had been taken at a mean advantage.

Not knowing what else to do, he read the letter again. Secretly

he had been pleased with his letter to Keith—his first official move—and this was what had come of it. He had never thought for a moment that Keith would dare *name* a successor worse than himself, when the letter was obviously a polite dismissal.

"Well," he said aloud, and the walls rocked with his fury, "it shows that things are every bit as bad as I have heard." In talk he found solace that he could not immediately find elsewhere, and he went on: "Dean of the School of Religion! This is what comes of it when a German rationalist is head of a school of religion."

The doctor refolded the letter, creasing it with heavy hand, as though to crush some of the poison out, and, placing it in his pocket, left the office. He intended taking it up at once with Colonel Willingham, but it was lunch time, and the colonel was not in his office.

II

The *Weekly Lasso* was a scrawny sheet carrying the programme of the forensic associations and rosters of guests at fraternity parties. It was that and nothing more before Malcolm Leeds, a young man with some newspaper experience, became its news editor. With Malcolm came a change. He had enough sense of journalistic values to know what would take a Number One head and what should be buried underneath a Number Four on page three. He introduced certain sweeping reforms, such as leads to the stories, and he had been able to find news even in the cloisters of Martha Sumner University. Finding it, he played it up with such skillful misrepresentation that one of the city editors on the *Press* predicted that he would some day be the newspaper lion of the Hookworm Belt. Every week some professor bit a dog. When Professor McKnight chided the members of his class in Elizabethan poetry for their indolence, the *Lasso* carried the story on the front page with the headline, "Prof Says Students Invented Four-Hour Day." When the Political Science Association met at the university to discuss mild ways and means of international coöperation, the *Lasso* said: "Dons Assemble to Decide League and World Court."

Colonel Willingham had lunched in the city with influential

friends and did not return to the campus until midafternoon the day Chancellor Dickey got the infuriating letter from Dean Keith. Before he had reached his office, Professor Finch halted him, waving a copy of the student paper like a roadman's flag.

"Have you seen the *Lasso*?" the professor asked accusingly.

"No, I'm just back from lunch, Professor. What's in it?"

Finch, an excitable little red man who went about with large volumes of economics texts in his arms, balanced his burden on the post of a staircase and spread the *Lasso* out like a tragedian unrolling parchment.

"Just look at that," he ordered, pointing to a 24-point banner display which ran full across the six columns of the front page. Then, not content to fall modestly into second place, he proceeded to read aloud, keeping time all the while with his long ruler finger:

"*'New President Institutes Compulsory Chapel.'* That's not so bad. But read on there: *'Asks Keith to Resign and Appoints Warren Acting Chaplain.'* That's what alarms me. Why did he do that? That's a bad administrative move. But read on further there."

He hastened on, reading with great mumbling speed over the facts that were familiar to him, then retarding like a great orchestra to accent with resounding staccatos these words:

"Jackson Warren, professor of Religion and Ethics and well-known author, has been selected by Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey as acting chaplain of the university and has signified his willingness to serve, according to announcement made to-day.

And so on. Now, that's mighty queer to me, Colonel. There's something rotten in the State of Denmark, if you ask me. Do you know what I believe?" he asked belligerently, taking the business manager by the lapels. "I believe this is part of a conspiracy to put the new administration in a bad light."

"You're dead right. You're absolutely right," the colonel replied with a fine grimace of displeasure. "I had some warning of this yesterday," he continued, glancing about the hall to be sure that none of the administration's enemies was in sight.

"But I never dreamed Easton and his crowd would go this far just right now. Mark my word, it's just their way of starting a fight."

"Well, that's the way it looks to me. The idea!" said the professor remonstratingly, addressing his remark to some vague crowd of naughty boys who had, out of the dark, thrown a dead cat on his porch. All the tedium of a life of economic theory and banking and statistics seemed for a moment dissipated by the prospect of a harmless fight. Light from the camp fires of the enemy set his face aglow.

"Let my attitude be known if the occasion arises," he went on courageously. "I should like the chancellor to know that at least *some* members of the faculty are solidly behind him."

Colonel Willingham placed a pudgy hand on the economics professor's arm and squeezed it gratefully. "That's fine, Dr. Finch. I knew you were made of the right stuff. I must be off now, to see what can be done."

When the colonel reached his office he found a copy of the *Lasso* spread open on his desk with a note attached saying that Chancellor Dickey wished to see him at once. Miss Conklin, his own secretary, got up from the typewriter long enough to stretch her theatrical figure and announce, as though waking from a dream, that the doctor had been in twice since two o'clock. "He's running a fever about what's in that paper," she said apathetically.

Once in the hall, hastening toward the chancellor's office, he thought for the first time, curiously enough, of the evening papers. What if they carried the *Lasso* story? Fear racked his body; the pounding of his heart resounded through his head and dinned his temples. But they wouldn't, without consulting him or Dr. Dickey. The *Evening Herald* wouldn't, but how about the *Press*? He knew that there were prowling reporters among the students, indigent young scribes intent on making five dollars. The *Press* would carry the story in the worst possible fashion—that much was certain. But the *Evening Herald*—why had they not 'phoned him when he had promised to keep them informed on the doings of the university?

Dean Banks brushed past him in the outer office. "Oh, Colonel, is that you?" he asked absently. "The chancellor is furious. He wants to see you right away." He looked down at Willingham vacantly, as though preoccupied with the business manager's red

tie. "That was a sneaking trick. I'm off to see what I can find out about how the story got into the *Lasso*."

"I'm worried about the *Press*," the colonel replied, in evidence that his concern was with bigger things. "There's no telling where all this will end."

From her seat behind the railing Maizie looked up at the men with the quizzical, frightened stare of a cow regarding intruders who might harm her calf in the next lot. "Chancellor Dickey is waiting for you," she said as the dean hastened on to ferret out the truth and Willingham turned toward the chancellor's door. "Oh, I do hope nothin' serious will happen."

III

A long, grating buzz, signifying the vigor and perturbation of the man who pushed the button, answered Willingham's knock. "Come in," the chancellor said shortly. "I presume you have seen this yellow sheet," he continued, holding a copy of the *Weekly Lasso* at arm's length and meeting the business manager halfway to the door. "I have been trying vainly to get in touch with you, for I feel that you are in some measure to blame for allowing this story to appear." For a moment he towered over the little man, drunk with the knowledge that here was someone he could abuse with impunity, and at a moment when he wanted irresistibly to abuse someone. Then he went on more gently: "Of course I mean that you of all men on the campus should know what goes into this thing each week." It was his first real contact with student publications. He had regarded them as harmless diversions, by the use of which students learned to write good English. Never had it occurred to him until that day that the undergraduate press could vitally affect his administration; and now that he knew it, the fact that student papers were allowed to exist unsupervised seemed to him as dangerous as allowing children to play with knives and matches. Anything holding such power of weal or woe should be reserved for adults. "I am informed by Dean Banks that heretofore no faculty supervision has been exercised over student publications."

"Well, of course the professor of journalism is supposed to know what goes into the *Lasso*," Willingham replied weakly,

aware that his negligence had brought him down at least five pegs in the new chancellor's estimation.

"Well, if he passed on this libelous story before it went in, he is a most irresponsible member of the faculty. In the future, Colonel Willingham, you cannot be too careful over what goes into the columns of this paper. I shall insist that you read everything with care and report to me on any questionable items. Why, this is terrible!" he said, looking again at the blatant headlines and thinking again of the possible havoc they would play. With no knowledge of journalism and news values, he could not but accept the story as a deliberate intent to do him harm. "I predicted, as you recall, that Keith would leave nothing undone to make my administrative position false."

The chancellor tossed the *Lasso* back onto his desk with such ferocity that it seemed to restore his faculties. "Now, Colonel," he said more calmly, "what do you think we had better do?"

"I'm afraid, Doctor, that there's not much we can do." A moment later he added with every appearance of hesitancy and reluctance, "I was just wondering if the afternoon papers could have happened to get hold of the story."

The doctor's strong face paled at the prospect. "Have you called them?" he demanded.

"Not chet. I just got back from a conference at lunch. I'll call 'em now."

He commanded the operator to get him the *Evening Herald*.

"Let me have Croly," he said with a lordly voice a moment later. To the doctor he soothed: "I'm sure they would have called me before printing that stuff."

"Hello! Croly?" He looked intently at the 'phone, his head inclined forward in an earnest, supplicating bow. "This is Colonel Willingham. Say, you're not printing anything on Warren this afternoon, are you? . . . What? . . . Where you running it? . . . What size head? . . . You better drop that right away. It's not official. . . . Wait a minute."

The colonel placed his hand over the mouthpiece and turned to Doctor Dickey. "He says it's too late. He says he's got to compete with the *Press*."

The chancellor reflected furiously. He saw great presses pouring out their scandalous sheets by the thousands. Even as he

thought, the lie about him was printed perhaps hundreds of times. Was there no way he could thrust himself against the giant machine and stop its mischief?

"Stop the press!" he shouted. "Tell him it's all a lie."

"Hello, Croly. Your story's not official. Chancellor Dickey denies that Warren's been appointed. He says it's a frame-up. . . . Yeah. Will you do that? . . . Thanks, man. That's right."

The two men stood facing each other, united by a common feeling of impotence. Dr. Dickey wanted to ask again, and still again, "What can we do now?" but each time he checked himself with the knowledge that he was in command.

"I don't propose to be bullied by any young whippersnapper who takes it into his head he can run this university," he said vehemently, though he had the uncomfortable feeling that, with those news stories, he was being bullied that very moment.

"You can't afford to be," the colonel goaded, fairly twitching with earnestness. "No, sir, you can't afford to be. You ought to give that fellow Keith a piece of your mind, Doctor. And I'd take this whole matter up with the executive committee."

"Oh, yes. I must. If what I think is true," the chancellor went on, seating himself behind his desk and clasping his hands together with such force that the blood gathered in little splotches, "and I'm inclined to believe it is, I shall have to take some very positive steps."

From the cadaverous rigidity of the position in which he sat he derived some sense of strength, and his mind, badgered and bullied like a frightened rodent, saw that the time had come when he must begin desperately his programme of educational reform.

FIVE

VIRGINIA was the kind of woman who referred to herself in public as Mistress Doctor Dickey. She was the daughter of a village squire of the Reconstruction period and a woman not without a sense of social definitions. Something about her reminded one of a sparrow at first, though the picture of a sparrow soon gave way to one of a roc after a few moments in her presence. She was rather small of stature and wore rimless nose glasses. Women with whom she associated in club and church life regarded her as a shrew, but it was largely because of her competence and because she had the energy of nature without nature's subtlety. She was practical, shrewd, relentless, and, as is generally the case with such women, her ruthless methods with her husband were but the compensation for an imperfect relationship. She was not especially content with her marriage, and Dr. Dickey was certainly not anything to make her essentially a creature of passion. Life had not dealt any too generously with her, she felt, and she would have at it with a vengeance until it gave her something satisfying.

Her husband she looked upon as a mechanism. Press this button and you had him humiliated; press that one and you had him overweeningly ambitious. He was at best a toy, and without her directing intelligence he would have been derelict upon a sea of indecision. If he did anything well it was because she stood at the controls; if he did anything stupid it was because he had acted without her manipulation. And she was content to remain behind the scenes, for she knew the public contempt for a man who had surrendered his pants.

"What kind of a day did you have, Horse?" she asked him as the Dickeys sat about the dinner table the evening the unhappy news of Keith's appointment broke. She called the Doctor something which can be written "Horse" as nearly as it can be written at all.

"Not 'specially good, dear," the doctor replied, looking up almost frightened from his plate and darting a significant glance in the direction of Marion. "Rather good on the whole, though."

She knew by that that he did not care to discuss the day in his daughter's presence. He had a way of wanting to shield her and in this Mrs. Dickey was only too willing to coöperate.

"How do you think you're going to like it, Marion?" the doctor asked of his daughter a moment later.

"Fine, Dad," she replied with unsophisticated enthusiasm. "It's fun to be around a bunch of boys again." Then she walled her eyes at him and added, "And to be around my daddy."

The doctor blushed slightly and took a sip of water. "It's nice of you to count me in," he said jovially. "How about a date one of these evenings?"

"Sure thing," the girl agreed, "if Mother will let me go out with you."

Mrs. Dickey spread an indulgent smile over her face. "He's a rascal, Daughter. I'm not sure I want you out with him."

"These modern young girls can take care of themselves, you know," Marion assured her.

"So it is said," the doctor mused, "but sometimes I doubt it."

"Ah, Dad, you're such a pessimist. You're always afraid something's going to happen to your baby. That's why you sent me to a girl's school, I'll bet. Why, we flappers," she went on, flopping her arms in mock hilarity, "are the safest creatures on earth."

"You are not a flapper, Marion," Mrs. Dickey corrected.

"Yes, I am," she insisted.

"Don't talk that way, dear," the doctor pleaded. He seemed genuinely disturbed for a second, and Marion laughed and got up from the table.

"I'm sorry, Dad," she said, patting him on the arm and fingering his neck. "Mother, I don't believe I want any dessert. If you'll excuse me, I'll run along."

Marion left the room, and the doctor cleared his throat and rinsed his mouth with water. "She's not going out anywhere, is she?" he asked with a measure of alarm.

"Yes, she's going out for a while," his wife replied.

"You're sure she's not going to a dance?"

"Of course I am, Horse. How ridiculous! You know I wouldn't approve of that."

"No, of course you wouldn't," the chancellor admitted quickly.

"But parents can't be too careful nowadays, you know. I wouldn't want her to get in with a wild, card-playing, dancing set around here. My enemies would play it up for all it was worth—besides the moral danger involved."

"That's true, I know, Horse," his wife rejoined sympathetically. "I've been thinking, though, that we ought to have some of the young people in for Marion. Why not have one or two university young people down for dinner once a week? Student leaders, you know. That way Marion could meet the best people, and it would be a grand way, too, for you to establish valuable contacts with the student body."

The chancellor appeared to ponder the idea; pondering was his only defense; he knew the moment Virginia spoke that the idea was good; it remained only to show that it met with his deliberate approval. And Virginia was thinking the idea undoubtedly good, for she had overheard a young Rhodes scholar at the faculty reception speak of the lasting good he had derived from breakfast with his Oxford dons.

"I believe, Virginia," the Chancellor announced at last, "that your idea is feasible. It would be fine to get the young people to put their feet under the table with us. We might ask young Harmon and the editor of the student paper at first. I'd like to take that young man in hand, and I might as well be tactful about it at first."

"Who's that?"

"I don't know his name. He's evidently some little smart-aleck. Do you know what happened this afternoon? The student paper announced—and of course the downtown papers picked it up—that I had appointed Warren chaplain of the university!" He leaned back in his chair defiantly, his demeanor asking, Can you beat that?

"Why, the idea!" Mrs. Dickey looked at him accusingly. "How could they do that? What did you do to give them any such chance?"

"Nothing. Nothing at all," the doctor replied guiltily.

"But you must have."

"No, not necessarily. They are an unscrupulous bunch."

"But they had to have some excuse."

"Well, you see, it happened this way," the chancellor explained,

but he was out of breath before he started. "You know I wrote Keith relieving him of the chaplaincy and asking him, purely out of formality, to nominate his successor. Of course I never *dreamed* that he would have the nerve to *name* the successor outright. Well, this afternoon I got a note from him saying that he had selected Warren and that Warren had consented to serve. That was bad enough, but a few moments later I saw a copy of the student paper, and there they had it in big headlines that *I* had appointed Warren."

"How maddening!" Mrs. Dickey exclaimed, squirming excitedly in her seat and gripping the slender stand of the compote before her with perilous vigor. "Now, what do you think the explanation of that is?"

The doctor hawed for a moment and went on: "It must be that this young editor, as well as everyone else on the campus, is in cahoots with the whole opposition. Otherwise, he would never have printed a story like that."

"Horse," Mrs. Dickey shook her head despairingly, "you are up against a very grave situation here, I'm afraid. You'll simply have to let them know where you stand, and in no uncertain terms, my dear."

She was glaring at him sternly now. No one was going to run over *her* husband—she would see to that. In a moment she went on: "You simply must get rid of that young Warren rascal, and right away. He's a stench in the nostrils of respectable people. Why, do you know, I heard this afternoon that he has been reading papers on *birth* control before the women's clubs here."

"What?" The doctor's eyes bulged, and he squared his executive shoulders to look at her incredulously.

"He has. He has been doing the most awful things. Why, I heard things this afternoon at the university women's club I wouldn't dare to repeat to you as my husband, even." She shuddered like a virgin at the sight of a prostitute. "Why, it's terrible to think of this report getting out, Horse. You see, I hope, how important it is for you to act at once."

"Yes, I must act," he said helplessly.

"Horse, I do believe you are afraid."

"Afraid? Why, you're ridiculous, Virginia. I'm not afraid."

She studied him like a hard problem before she spoke again; and then when she started to speak, the doctor interrupted.

"I'm not the least bit afraid," he said emphatically, "and I don't see why you should think I am. I am just a bit uncertain as to how I ought to proceed."

"Uncertain? Do you realize that one of the first reasons you were brought to the university was to get rid of this young whippersnapper?"

"Certainly, dear, but I don't just know how to go about it."

She was obviously impatient by now. "How else could you go about it except tell him to get out? You didn't hesitate the last time you found a man guilty of indecency in your college. How could this case be any different?"

"Well, it just is, Virginia. That other man was teaching physical education to girls and this man is teaching religion."

"Religion! Humph! You ought to know what I know about him," she announced.

"Perhaps if I did," the doctor suggested, "I could act more wisely, but, as it is, I shall have to think it over. You don't understand all the difficulties involved."

"Oh, no," she sighed in disgust. "I never understand. Well, just what is it I don't understand? Just what is it, I'd like to know?"

"I shouldn't have said you didn't understand," he retreated hastily. "What I meant was that you don't quite realize, naturally, how involved this whole thing is. I can't move until I am sure of my ground. I don't want to stir up more trouble over this young mugwump than he is worth."

"Well." She got up from the table with an air of finality. "Of course, you can do as you please. But I don't see what you are afraid of."

Mr. Hawk called him on the wire shortly after dinner. "That's just what I expected from those big-ikes, Doctor," he said in a tone that made the 'phone vibrate and the wires groan with static. "You stand right up to 'em. Don't let 'em back you off."

It was all perfectly clear. He must have it out with Keith the next morning. Not only so; he must pave the way for getting rid of Warren. But how? How? How? His mastery of university

technique was not yet sufficient to cover the *modus operandi* of faculty dismissals. In his former position the problem had been much simpler, for the young instructor whom he had expelled had been guilty of a species of physical immorality. Now, while mental immorality was quite as bad and even considerably more dangerous, it was much harder to deal with in an open, vigorous fashion.

Would it, for example, be proper to say, "We have decided to ask you to look for new fields of labor"? Or, "We have concluded to dispense with your services"? Neither phrase had the proper academic ring. They both savored of the pastorate and the business world. How about, "Recommend that he not be re-appointed"? That he liked. It seemed to say so little and mean so much. One had to repeat it several times to be sure there was no double negative in it. Yet it would not, unfortunately, suffice for the urgent purpose of getting rid of Warren at once, before the fall term really got on its way.

The more he thought—and he was propped up comfortably for thinking, slouched down in the chair of his study, with his feet on another chair and his eyes fixed relentlessly upon a point where the draperies converged at the top of the window—the more disagreeable the situation became. If he moved openly in the dismissal of Warren, he would incite the faculty to open rebellion. There really might be an awful rumpus. It was a public secret that a large part of the faculty had opposed his coming to the university. If reports were correct, there had even been a petition of protest, though Mr. Hawk admitted that it had never come to the attention of the regents. What, then, could be expected if he dismissed Warren? There was McKnight, a sneaking and meddlesome professor of English who read to the women's clubs perfectly infamous papers on Shakespeare's sonnets and had been heard to say that marriage was not the final solution of the sex problem; and Sedberry, the professor of sociology, of whom it was said that he had permitted and encouraged one of his students to write a term theme on the value of socialism; and Farrell, the political scientist who had once said at a convocation that the American experiment in democracy might one day end in an oligarchy; and, above all, Easton, that irritable old busybody who went about like a mad dog, biting

everyone opposed to his academic policies; it was reported on solemn authority that he had taught classes in which he said that Germany was not solely responsible for the war and that Woodrow Wilson was Kaiser Wilhelm with a shave.

All such men must, of course, be swatted sooner or later like so many flies. But, the doctor said to himself, the time for the fly-swatting was not yet. He must, he told himself as he removed his house slipper and felt tentatively of an old bunion, act cautiously for a time. . . .

With stern and implacable determination he faced the problem before him. His brow grew more beetled as the evening wore on. He heard Virginia making her toilet and going through the long liturgy of ablution which she enacted every night before retiring; he heard Marion come in and go quietly to her room. He wanted to call to her, but the sinister fascination of the problem in his mind silenced him. Then, as his joints began to ache from concentration, he came out from under the influence of thought and stretched himself as luxuriously as a cat. He was no nearer a solution than he had been when he started, but his mind had become more nimble with the passing of each hour, and he was convinced by now that there was some way around the impasse before him.

It was only as he had taken off his trousers and stood scratching his chin meditatively and looking at himself through a fog of thought in the mirror that an idea smote him. It moved nebulously in his brain at first, but it took shape as it rolled through space, and shortly out of the void it burst upon him with the fullness and brilliance of a new planet, conceived and brought forth in the twinkling of the divine eye. It spun around the name of James Cuthbert. It was solid, it was real, and it would work. He slapped his knee jovially, paused a second to reconsider, then shook his trousers and hung them almost hilariously on a chair. He stroked his chin proudly now and looked at himself in the mirror with a measure of permissible self-esteem.

In bed he could not sleep for sheer exuberance. He would see Keith to-morrow as planned and begin it all. No one should be taken into his confidence. A time or two the thought that what he planned was possibly not in the completest accord with high ethical principles disturbed his pleasant reverie, but he would

not permit himself to admit as much even to himself. It was his prime business, he said over and over to himself, and somewhat sleepily at last, to reform American education, and with this assuaging realization he fell at last into a troubled sleep.

He awoke once with a feeling of malaise at the pit of his stomach, gnawing there; it was so real that it seemed external, and he rubbed a sleepy hand over the spot. Then he fell asleep again, dreaming this time that he was a Roman emperor in a canvas nightgown watching the lions devour Christians; only he was sitting, not in the arena, but in his chair at the office; someone shouted "Assassination! Assassinate the emperor!" and Keith, a trim young fellow with quick muscles, leaped out of empty space and made for the emperor's throat like a madman. Easton, a stodgy old walrus, stepped from behind a column of Martha Sumner Hall—or was it the Coliseum?—and fastened his great teeth in the doctor's neck. Then a clamor of students and professors and hungry lions surrounded him and carried him off into a land of strange forms of torture. The lions were still there, and he noticed that one of them had a part of a pair of pants still in his bloody chops. At last his tormentors placed him half naked on a high pedestal and made him lift his hands and pray while they jeered and hooted and poked at him; then he slipped blindly over the edge of a cloud and dropped, dropped, dropped until he seemed to dissolve and distribute himself throughout a great black vacuum. . . .

TO DISCIPLINE a dean is no mean task. The chancellor realized that all too well before he was half through with a disagreeable conference the next morning at ten o'clock—just as the students were filing into chapel, searching gloomily for seats assigned them, and Dean Banks was flipping frantically through the hymnal for an appropriate opening number.

Dr. Dickey would have much preferred to drop Keith a note carrying the full impact of his reprimand. He would have preferred to drop it like a bomb while he scampered away to reflect on the havoc it would work. But he had learned of late to distrust letters, and, moreover, he foresaw that a face-to-face encounter must come sooner or later; he was sagacious enough to know that if it came on his own initiative it would give him some advantage. As the new teacher he must ask the village bad boy to remain after school.

Accordingly he had asked Maizie to summon the dean to his office at once. Maizie, scenting trouble, had called the Keith residence when she had not found her "party" in his office and had apparently insisted that the young man bring himself at once to be spanked. When the dean came, there was a glint of defiance in his eye, which enabled the chancellor to say, preliminaries over, "I suspect you know full well why I summoned you here."

"I cawn't say that I do," Dean Keith responded with that odious broad *a*. "It appears most urgent, though." He waited agilely, his eyes flashing, as though daring the doctor to strike first and give him just cause for battle.

"Very, very urgent," the chancellor replied, seizing the word and wielding it like a scimitar. "That is, if the very grave injury you have done my administration is not already irreparable."

Dean Keith lifted his eyebrows in pained inquiry. "I have done you no injury." The statement was flat, unequivocal—a challenge.

"You have done me a great wrong," the chancellor countered, coming forward with such force in his swivel chair that he

seemed to catapult himself half across the executive desk. "You have wronged me by your mischief, and I dare say you have done it intentionally." He laid his finger under the dean's nose with the accuracy of a pugilist. "Both the impertinent letter you sent me yesterday and the unjustified presumption you showed in informing Warren of what appeared to be my appointment could have but one purpose—you intended to embarrass my administration. I want you to know, sir, that you are dealing with a man who won't tolerate any such underhand activity. I won't," he added fiercely, "I won't stand for it, and the quicker you and Warren and a lot of others around here realize it, the better."

"Hold on," Keith replied with a calmness that seemed to buckle his skin. "You have exaggerated everything except the facts. You asked for my recommendation. I gave it. I did recommend Warren and found that he would serve. I merely took a detail off your shoulders. That's the whole truth. What you say is highly inferential and, being so, is most unbecoming to you and highly distasteful to me."

"What becomes me is not for you to say, Mr. Keith." His vocabulary of tact and diplomacy seemed dissipated beyond recall. Frantically he searched through the corners of his mind for those cloudy phrases which would prevent his saying a thing he did not want to say. He had intended to carry the fort by storm, but the resistance of the rebel forces was more than he expected. "I am convinced, sir, that you intended by your ruse to raise, that is to say, to put my whole administration in an essentially false light. Otherwise, why did you make that announcement to the press?"

"I made no announcement to the press, and the man who said I did is a liar. In response to a question put me by young Leeds, I gave out the information that I had been asked to appoint my successor as chaplain. There my responsibility stops and the responsibility of the college paper and, in turn, the city papers begins."

The doctor fidgeted with his watch chain before replying. When he went on it was the sound of his voice rather than the substance of his speech that carried weight. "You might as well get this straight, Keith. My administration is not going to

tolerate a lot of monkey business from smart-aleck young professors. You will find me a most agreeable man to deal with so long as you act in accord with my principles."

The last sounded particularly weak and obvious, and the doctor struck the arm of his chair a resounding blow to give it force.

Keith regarded him sullenly, playing all the while with a small piece of paper on the glass top of the desk. Whatever else he may have been, he was certainly not impressed. He was managing, the doctor reflected petulantly, to keep up the appearance of being right. Some new tack must be taken at once or the chancellor would botch an interview—his first—and let an erratic dean walk out of his office unconvinced and undisciplined; Keith might even run amuck on the campus and start a revolution.

Removing his glasses and rubbing his eyes and then putting his glasses impressively in their place again, the doctor said in a considerably more businesslike tone:

"I had several purposes in calling you here. The first I have already stated. The second can be put briefly. I find that we have been very careless in the administration of the funds of the university; with a view to effect certain economies here and there, I have found it necessary to curtail the expenditures of the various departments—always with the consent of the presiding dean, of course. While I am not in a position to say, just yet, what the exact sum of your department's reduction will be, I am confident it will run in the neighborhood of five or six thousand dollars.

"Now, that," the doctor went on in the suave manner of a benignant banker, "will not affect you personally, Mr. Keith. It need not seriously affect or impair the work of any other professor in your department. It means chiefly a reduction of young and incompetent instructors and the like."

"Which is to say," Dean Keith replied, "that all papers must be graded by the professors. Isn't that a rather high-school arrangement?"

"I dare say it may be." The doctor smiled in a most agreeable way. "But I must insist that there will not be at this time any retrérenchments in salary on the part of the regular professors."

"That's something," Keith said, as though he were receiving a generous concession. "And you are sure," he went on, "that

there is no remote connection between the two things you have spoken of in this interview, a resentment of me and the curtailment of the funds available for my department?"

The doctor's smile flowered into a laugh, a little hollow but reasonably convincing. "My dear fellow, certainly not. It would be ridiculous, and I believe you can appreciate the fact, for me to reprimand you in one breath and in the next make a financial move against you. You credit me with a stupidity which I do not possess."

Resuming his tone of diplomacy and business, Chancellor Dickey continued: "What I have done in this instance is dictated by the stern demands of economic necessity, Mr. Keith. By nothing more or less than the stern demands of economic necessity. It is my unhappy business to supervise the business affairs of this institution. I believe you will appreciate my position. It is a very difficult one." He sighed.

"And I presume this curtailment affects other departments as well?"

"Oh, indeed, yes!" Dr. Dickey had a way of saying "Oh, indeed, yes!" so that it made his confrères feel very foolish for not knowing whatever it was they asked. "I think it is extremely interesting, Mr. Keith, how you persist in taking this move as a discrimination against you and your department. I think you must have been gravely misinformed about my character and my policies."

"Perhaps I have," Keith smiled. He crossed his legs and straightened out his trousers carefully, both to preserve the crease and to conceal his embarrassment. Then, in a way he had of doing things suddenly, he asked point-blank: "What do you intend to do about Warren?"

The doctor winced as visibly as if someone had poked him with a red-hot branding iron. Recovering, he pursed his lips and placed his hands over his mouth and whistled softly and thoughtfully through his thumbs. The press accounts he had seen flashed through his mind. "Let us express the joyous hope," said one ferocious paper devoted to the post-war theocracy, "that the election of Brother Dickey, whose theology has always been above reproach, will mean the immediate retirement of that arch enemy of the Faith, Kaiser Jackson Warren." Other jour-

nals had not been so blatant, but every comment the doctor read had rested on the common assumption that Warren must go. Letters about Warren and his teaching poured in daily. They ranged from open threats to wheedling pleas, but they were all of one accord: the heretic must be driven from the holy of holies. Many of them were so strident in tone, so imperious in gesture, that the chancellor had almost concluded a time or two to keep Professor Warren on exhibit just to show who was running the university. But that was impossible. . . . And now here was Keith, the apostle of modernism to the gentiles of the Southwest, asking what he intended to do. At last he replied, his quiet manner in solemn contrast to the turbulent nature of his thoughts:

"You engaged Professor Warren, did you not?"

"I certainly did."

"Then, if he is dismissed, you will have to dismiss him."

The two men sat looking at each other, searching fiercely for some evidence of dissimulation.

"You mean that?" the dean asked.

"I mean it," the chancellor replied, adding in a tone which carried some of the acerbity and volume which he reserved for impressive moments, "and you are at liberty to publish it if you want to."

"Oh, I wouldn't do that," Keith said a trifle guiltily.

There was silence for a moment, and both men seemed ready to speak at once; it was Dean Keith who beat the gun. "What about your avowed intention of getting rid of Warren?"

"I have made no such avowed intention," the doctor replied sharply.

Keith smiled slightly and looked about the room. "It amounts to that," he insisted.

"What amounts to what?" The doctor's manner was changing rapidly from that of a benignant banker to that of a prosecuting attorney. Keith had no choice but to cough and attempt to explain:

"Everyone knows, Doctor——"

"Everyone knows nothing, sir, and you might just as well get that straight. I have told you that, if Warren is dismissed, you will do it. Do you understand? I don't see how I can make

it any clearer to you." The last word was ever so slightly italicized, and the doctor's voice was roaring again.

"Now," he went on solemnly and in measured tones, "the chief reason I called you here is this: It is time for this bickering and backbiting on the part of the faculty to stop, and to stop once and forever. It is time for us to get united and move toward some great common objective." He hesitated here a moment to gather breath and force. "I have made a most careful analysis of our needs in this institution, and I want you to know, sir, that what this institution needs most of all right now is a real, old-fashioned revival of religion."

He paused and regarded his adversary with narrowing eyes, challenging this hifalutin pedagogue to deny the efficacy of the Christian religion. There he had him. Whatever his administrative beliefs, Keith as dean of the School of Religion was not fool enough to deny openly that religion was needed in abundance. Apparently he had no thought of denying it, for he sat quietly now, the fire in his eyes having given way to a glow of astonishment. He seemed increasingly uncomfortable, and before the interview was over he was fairly squirming.

"I am surprised, Dean Keith, greatly surprised," the doctor said, shaming the dean like a naughty child, "that you yourself, in your position, have not thought of this long before. It is a sad commentary on your work and your interest that a suggestion of this sort must come from me.

"Now, beginning just as soon as the campaign can be arranged, we will have a great revival in the university. Meanwhile, I am asking the faculty as a whole and as individuals to step out like men and do everything they can for the success of this magnificent effort. Let's lay aside our differences and settle our puny quarrels and work together for the Kingdom of the Lord. I want the faculty to be spiritual leaders as well as intellectual leaders. I want you, as the leader of the religious forces of the school, to give yourself heart and soul to this great enterprise. Nothing, absolutely nothing, sir, is so important as the building of character. This school is dedicated to that worthy purpose, and I consecrate myself to its accomplishment. May I expect your coöperation?"

Keith was disarmed. Confusion was written on his face. Clearly

he saw the consequences of his refusal. Certainly the doctor's effort to discipline him had failed, but his effort to place him in a position of great embarrassment had not failed. Irritably he replied: "Why, of course you can count on my coöperation. But this seems an unfair advantage."

"Unfair? Do you realize that you have been guilty of a breach of academic decorum?" The use of the phrase frightened the doctor, and he hastened on: "Yet all I am asking now is that you join us in this great attempt to bring a spiritual awakening to the university campus."

"And pay no attention to such matters as academic freedom?"

"Academic freedom be hanged. Subordinate these little difficulties to the larger good. Why, I hope you don't deny that a spiritual awakening is the most important thing that could happen to this institution? You don't question the validity of Christianity for our needs, I hope?"

"I haven't said I did." The dean grew sullen again. "In fact——"

"Of course you haven't," the chancellor hurried on. "That would never do. I believe you are going to throw your whole soul into this campaign. Why, sir, the angels in heaven can't calculate the good such a campaign will do. But all of us must work together. I don't want anything or anybody to stand in the way of one of the greatest revivals in history."

A few moments later, when Keith left the doctor's office there was an air about him which assured the Chancellor that if he did not coöperate he would not stand in the way. If he had not exactly come to scoff and remained to pray he had at least come to harrow the administration and had gone away with a full knowledge of the administration's steel. The interview had turned out successfully. Keith had been placed in a position from which he could do no harm; that was sufficient. He could not be dismissed until the end of the academic year. Meanwhile nothing remained for the present but to bring on the revival in all its glory.

SEVEN

I'D LIKE to get the straight of this," Albert McKnight remarked eagerly. He and Editor Leeds hovered over sandwiches in a remote corner of the Meadowbrook Tea Room shortly after the crest of the noon rush of town students had withdrawn. "Dickey said you'd have to show everything to Willingham before it went in after this, did he?"

Leeds nodded solemnly.

"Do you intend to do it?"

"That's a pretty question for you to ask, Professor." Leeds grinned widely at his jest. To chat on equal terms with a great professor was not a thing he could do without a chill of pride and audacity now and then. To have a great professor incite him to open rebellion, even by an inferential question, made his head swim with a sense of intimacy. "Why, hell, what else can I do?"

"All the copy has to bear the hallmark, 'O.K. G. C. Willingham,' does it?" McKnight countered.

"That's what G. C. Willingham said."

"Did you talk with him?"

"He with me."

"When?"

"This morning."

"Where?"

"On the carpet."

"Dickey wasn't around?"

"Oh, no."

"You didn't even have any direct word from Dickey? What'd Willingham have to say?"

"Why he just said that the new administration had decided that a pretty close lookout would have to be kept over the *Lasso*, especially after what had occurred Wednesday, and that as director of public relations he would have to see everything that we printed hereafter."

"What did you say?"

"Why," Leeds replied guiltily, "I just said, 'All right, Colonel.'"

—except I didn't say 'Colonel.' I just said, 'All right.' What else was there for me to say?"

"Of course you know what all this means, don't you?" McKnight lifted a sandwich and took one of the angles meditatively between his teeth. Then he laid it down without a bite. "It's just the first stitch toward sowing up the whole university. Dickey's given Willingham a free hand. Mark me, this campus will be a sty in less than fifteen months. . . . What are you going to say editorially on Dickey's first move?"

"What I have to say wouldn't pass Willingham," the editor replied proudly. "I suppose I'll write something subtle."

McKnight smiled indulgently. From the look in his eyes he might have said any one of a hundred things. Leeds felt relief when the professor finally remarked, "Yes, anything subtle would get by Willingham. But not too subtle. He'll be suspicious. Truth is, I don't see anything left for you to do but to indorse. Throttling the press is the first step toward complete autocracy. With a cross between the Apostle Paul and Benito Mussolini in the chancellor's office, I think we begin to be in a poor way around this institution. . . . You might say that," he suggested, then broke into a laugh that suspended all his normal activities and left the young man wondering if it were directed at him, or at the possibility of his saying anything so clever, or at the world in general.

"May I ask what the members of our faculty intend doing?" Leeds prodded when McKnight had leaned forward onto the table once more and taken the first bite of his sandwich.

McKnight waited, as he always did, before replying to a direct question, then he said: "That's difficult to say. Truth is, I hardly know."

"Easton will be high behind, won't he?" Leeds tried again.

"Yes, I suspect so. Keith called on the chancellor yesterday. You might see him and get an interview."

That would be futile, but the thought of it roused the editor's imagination, and he began sniffing about for news. Such glorious items, and he couldn't print a one of them.

"Why don't you resign?" McKnight asked suddenly.

Leeds sat meditating the significance of this question when he heard Janet Rawlings shout, "Bravo!" and felt her slap him

on the back. "There's an idea," she continued. "Another good headline for the press: 'Young Editor,' no, 'Brilliant Young Editor Spurns Presidential Manhandling; Says He'll None of it and Resigns.'" She seated herself without apology at the table, waving Helen Morse, a freshman protégée, to the seat next Malcolm. McKnight arose, obviously pleased if a little chagrined at so much vitality.

"I hope I'm not intruding," she continued, as though she had for the first time thought of that possibility. "Helen and I are famished. I have been grading freshmen themes all morning, and God knows I've need of something solid for my viscera. There's a good word, Professor."

"Tell it to the editor," McKnight replied, settling his steel frame once more in his chair and looking about for a waiter.

"Oh, he already has more than he can use," Janet retorted. "A lot more, I'll wager. Haven't you, Malcolm? Professor, I've caught you fraternizing with the students again. Your reputation will be worse than mine before long."

"You've heard about the censorship, then?" McKnight queried. He regarded Janet with quiet foreboding. One could never tell just what she would do—she rather sobered the most sprightly of men. In her presence even the fellow who boasted that he had a way with women was thrown definitely on the defensive and found himself at once doing little things to show that he had a way with women. Around her she had gathered from the young instructors in the Department of English a group of insurgents which even McKnight occasionally regarded with a mild feeling of alarm. Janet had been East. A year at Columbia had given her the edge and made her at once a leader of envious young men and women who read Sherwood Anderson and wrote bad poetry. She had seen Sherwood Anderson—had even met Mr. Mencken. And Sinclair Lewis had once invited her to a house party, but she had pleaded a previous engagement. Returning to Martha Sumner University, she had rented an apartment off the campus—that itself was a daring thing to do—and had fastened upon the pretty young Helen Morse as a roommate. On Sunday afternoons she held open house for many friends, and during the week-nights there congregated at her apartment

a bevy of young folks who chattered and occasionally read to one another their poems or indulged stiffly in intellectual fornication. Janet herself had published one short story in the *Forum* and had sold verse occasionally to the *Bookman*. She was working now, she had confided to McKnight, on an article which she had talked to Mr. Mencken about; it was to deal with the sex life of undergraduates, particularly in denominational colleges.

"Certainly I've heard. What are you taking, Helen dear? . . . Make it two. No, I want something solid. Minute steak and coffee. That's good. And all the perquisites. Yes, I've heard," she resumed, stretching her hands on the table and looking up at the professor with a well-cultivated air of sophistication. "I don't see any need for a student paper when news gets around as speedily as this has. Everybody knows it—and everybody wonders what you are going to do, young man."

"That's what we were discussing when you came up," Malcolm announced.

"Then I'll help. You said resign, didn't you, Professor?"

"I think I did."

"Well, I say don't. Where'll it get you, Malcolm? Dickey—God, what a name!—Dickey will merely pad a new staff with young apostles from the Y. M. C. A. They'll carry out his holy purposes all too gladly—and besides, think what English they will write."

"Then you counsel discretion?" Malcolm queried.

"Did I ever? No. I say stay in there and fight 'em. Make it hard on the colonel. It won't be long before he'll tire of reading all your tripe. He may turn it over to that Miss Conklin he has. Then you can use your sex appeal on her."

McKnight dropped into the rôle of unofficial observer. It thrilled him every whit as much to be privy to the mind of the younger generation as it did Simeon Hawk to be included on high affairs of state. Now he smiled upon this mannequin who drew ideas from her red bobbed head with the ease and absurd dexterity of a Houdini—smiled in a way that congratulated her yet in a way also that had enough sardonic twitches to leave him wholly uncommitted to her idea or her attitude. "Do you think there will be any dismissals?" he asked deliberately.

"Think? There's no cause to think. It's all too obvious. What do I see? I see a new preacher come to town. He finds the people living in sin. A few respectable citizens tell him God's depending on him. So he'll close the dens of vice and ride the chief sinners out of town on a rail. Warren will go. And," she added, pulling up her stockings with a vigorous heave and shaking her head oratorically, "it won't be long until you'll go, too, Professor."

"Maybe not. And you?"

"Oh, me? I'm staying another year. I'm not important—that's all. I'll go to chapel. I'll drop a few of my licentious friends. I'm sorry, Malcolm, but I'll have to. I must guard my reputation. After all, what can we expect of life? Do you think it possible that a Southern school could long go on in such a heavenly way? Why, I think that's terribly naïve." To Malcolm the conversation seemed to be getting rather far afield. He still felt that as editor of the student paper and molder of student opinion he could come to grips with fundamentals. Janet was bright and clever and all that. But she was so disconcerting. She reduced everything to simplicity by denying its existence. There was a rule against smoking—a strong social convention, at least. But she smoked, and she had taught Helen to smoke. She never faced the question, Have the co-eds in general a right to smoke? She simply smoked. She never agitated. Yet the young editor was concerned with social rights and social responsibilities. His mind thought editorially. Janet's never.

"Well, our problem is already twofold," he said rather petulantly, laying out a fork and spoon to indicate the dual nature of the university's confrontation. "Here's a noble school with fine academic traditions threatened by a boor who wants to kick out every professor who thinks. Here is the organ of student opinion, throttled by the censorship of a wheezy fat man who knows no more about running a university than—ah——"

He paused. No one thought of a good epigram and everyone was miraculously silent.

"Now what's to be done about it? Are we to sit silently by?" Malcolm went on.

"Not silently," Janet ventured. "On the contrary, we'll have much that's amusing to talk about as long as Dickey bird remains in office. Isn't that compensation enough, as the Freudians

would say? Do you know why I don't mind staying around under the new régime? Simply because every day something ridiculous will happen. We'll always have new topics to discuss, and we can drop back on sex in an emergency."

"We may as well see that Willingham is the eyes of the new administration," Malcolm observed, turning to McKnight for approval and ignoring Janet.

But Janet would not be ignored. "Say rather that he's the eyes, ears, nose, and throat."

McKnight smiled at this, and Malcolm realized that the irresponsible young English instructor had the center of the stage again. As casually as possible he took an envelope from his pocket, held it in his hand, and blew into it until it bulged like a toy balloon. Then he took out a letter and unfolded it, holding it in readiness until his business attracted the attention of Janet.

"I'll bet that's a document of some importance," she said scurrilously.

"It may be," he announced solemnly. "I think I'll just let you all in on it. Guess what it is?"

"A tailor bill."

"You're overdrawn at the cashier's office."

"Come on. This is serious. This is a letter from the chancellor asking me to come to dinner at his house."

"I see where you go over to the enemy."

McKnight peered at the letter. "Is it really?"

"Sure thing. I just got it this morning. What do you think of that?"

"Read it," Janet ordered. "I want to see how many mistakes in freshman English it has."

Malcolm held the letter up before him and reeled it off like a recitation: "*Mister* Malcolm Leeds, Kappa Alpha House, Martha Sumner University. My dear *Mister* Leeds: Mrs. Dickey and I would be *so* glad if you could find it convenient to come to dinner with us next Friday evening at six in our home. If your plans will permit your acceptance of this invitation, please let me know. Sincerely yours, Horace Ethel—— How's that?" He was obviously pleased as he put the letter back into the envelope and struck a posture of mock pride.

"You're a fine revolutionary, a tireless comrade."

"Are you going?" McKnight asked.

"I haven't decided," Malcolm replied.

"Of course he's going," Janet informed them. "He wouldn't miss it for the world. Watch him blush."

MALCOLM tussled long and strenuously before he could get the consent of his better self to accept the chancellor's invitation to dinner. "Perhaps I oughtn't to compromise myself by going," he had apologized to Professor McKnight just after Browning class, "but I really want to see what the old man's like, what he wants, and all that." He would go to spy out the land of the enemy.

Then, too, he reflected as he shaved for the second time that day and donned a suit that had been specially pressed, the chancellor had a daughter. He had seen her once, standing alone in the hall. He had been first attracted by her legs and had later noticed that her face was exquisitely pretty—pretty and, what should he say?—world-weary. He had stood transfixed for a moment, feeling that he had been deeply moved and telling himself that she had been. Then she passed out of him like an emotion, and he probably would not have thought of her again had it not been for this invitation and for the spectacular prospect of being in love with the daughter of his enemy in affairs of state. . . . It was all fraught with sweet-smelling romance and intrigue.

He arrived a few moments late by the device of going a block out of his way and by stopping twice to tighten the laces of his shoes. Sarabelle admitted him to the parlor of the chancellor's home, and Mrs. Dickey arose as he entered.

"My dear Mr. Leeds," she yodeled. "How do you do."

Malcolm bowed imperceptibly from the hips and asserted, "How do you do."

"This is my daughter Marion," the hostess went on.

Marion gave him her hand with a coy twist of the arm in the shoulder socket, keeping her seat and smiling. Mrs. Dickey went on:

"And I'm sure you two big fellows know each other."

Malcolm had noticed Sphinx with dismay as he entered. Ill at ease, he sat sprawled out on the sofa talking to Marion, and when Mrs. Dickey presented Marion he got up like a camel. So this was the doctor's idea of society?

"Hi, Leeds," he said briefly and in good-fellow fashion.

"Hello yourself." Malcolm spoke the words dryly and sat down with Mrs. Dickey.

"Where do you come from, Mr. Leeds?" she asked him pleasantly enough, and at once he knew that she had fallen upon him to accumulate detailed information which she would recall with detestable accuracy when she saw him next. He listened unconsciously, replying civilly and overhearing all he could of the conversation between Marion and Sphinx.

"It's not as rough as you might think," the giant full back confided. "I've never been hurt, though I reckon I've hurt a lot of fellows."

"I'm sure you must have," Marion said with the slightest tremor in her voice. "You're so big and strong. I'm glad we girls don't have to play football." At this she shuddered.

Sphinx laughed and looked her over timidly from foot to head. "I'll bet you're pretty strong yourself, though."

"Sure I am," she agreed, tightening her arm to bulge the muscle. "Feel of that."

Sphinx felt. "Some muscle," he appraised. Then he let his hand linger in a caress. Mrs. Dickey was saying that she knew some Leedses who lived at Birmingham ten years before when she and the doctor had lived there. Malcolm was thinking that Sphinx was a terribly boorish fellow. He looked like a civilized gorilla; not that he lacked taste, for his clothes fitted him passably well, and his tie was not too loud for a campus idol's, but there was just something about him, just something about him . . .

Then he was conscious of a firm tread on the steps in the hall, and a moment later the towering form of the chancellor entered the room. Sphinx got up buoyantly and met him with outstretched hand. Both men were impressively large, and to Malcolm it seemed for a moment that two huge statues had pulled themselves loose from their bases and stalked across the square to greet each other. He felt depressingly small as the chancellor turned toward him.

"And how do you do—Mr. Leeds, I presume?" His great voice seemed distributed by amplifiers here and there in the room

and Malcolm, though he tried to blurt, sounded like the echo of a-whisper as he said:

"I'm glad to meet you, Dr. Dickey." He cleared his throat and gripped the chancellor's hand as hard as he could.

"I thought it would be nice to have you two young men at the same time," the doctor went on jovially and with the evident satisfaction of a ring master. "Two aspects of student life, we might say. The physical and the intellectual." This jest caused him to rock heartily, so heartily that Malcolm had to remind himself that the chancellor was a dangerous and a very bad man. He was undoubtedly showing off and being especially amiable before company.

II

At dinner Malcolm found himself seated providentially between Marion and Sphinx. The doctor seemed disposed to continue his conversation with the athlete, and after grace Marion turned to him and said with the same awe she had shown at Sphinx's brawn and courage:

"So you're the editor of the college paper, are you?"

Malcolm laughed in an offhand way. "Yes. That is, I try to be."

"I worked on the campus paper at Randolph-Macon," Marion boasted. "As a reporter."

"You did? Say, that's bully. I'd like to get you to write some stuff for me."

"I think Marion would like writing sports," Mrs. Dickey put in. "She's simply crazy about football."

"I do love it," Marion admitted with a quick glance at Sphinx.

"You didn't see much football at Randolph-Macon, did you?" Malcolm asked.

"Oh, a little," Marion answered, as though she had seen a great deal more than she dared tell. "I think going on a train to a game is more fun than anything."

This last statement Malcolm pondered as he studied the girl out of the corner of his eye. There was something decidedly winsome about her, even apart from her dark beauty. Her eyes had that evasive look which comes from gazing often into measureless space, he told himself; dreamy, and all that. He could and

did imagine her seated across the table from him among the bamboos of the tropics, gazing steadily past him out to the blue sea. Her throat and neck were exceptionally smooth, and he multiplied their charm by a hundred and arrived at a satisfactory picture of her breasts. The conviction was fast forming in his mind that he ought to rescue this maiden from the den of propriety in which she was imprisoned.

But try as he might he could not think of anything clever to say. He thought of one or two things which might turn out to be either very funny or very silly and, restrained by too great a desire to make a good impression, he did not say any of them and soon decided that they would have sounded intensely foolish if he had.

Thwarted in his desire to please the chancellor's daughter, he began to study the doctor. Whenever he felt unimportant in any gathering he immediately singled out some vulnerable individual to describe in satirical detail. He would make phrases and assure himself in this way that he was undoubtedly superior.

The doctor, he had to admit, had a certain air of distinction about him. There was an almost *scholarly* scowl upon his face—*countenance*. His brow was beetled by a *habit of appearing thoughtful* and his horn-rimmed nose glasses, fastened by a *flowing cord* to his vest, gave his face a *reinforced effect*. His black hair *was roached and sleeked like a matinée idol's*. Malcolm could not determine precisely what the chancellor's demeanor reminded him of, though he concluded at last that of a *stern and sullen Roman emperor*; though this would not quite do, for there was something very boyish and amiable about his manner, something *soft and ineffectual*. He concluded, rather cleverly, he thought, that the doctor could be spoken of most aptly as a *cross between Mussolini and the Prince of Wales*.

For a while he was too busy with his game to pay attention to what the doctor and Sphinx were saying. He soon realized, however, that it was not to be missed. The doctor was impressing upon Sphinx the importance of the coming revival.

"You know, Mr. Harmon," he was saying, "I believe our revival will do a great deal to stimulate a better school spirit among the students."

"Yes, sir, I reckon it will, all right," Sphinx readily agreed.

"There's hardly any school spirit now, so to speak. You can't get the students out to the games, somehow, and when they come they don't hoiler. 'Course, a lot of that's due to the fact that we didn't have much of a team to speak of last year, you might say."

"Of course, Mr. Harmon," the chancellor went on, "there are greater things than just supporting the team. We ought to have a school spirit here that will set its face staunchly against wrong in all its many aspects."

Sphinx dabbed his mouth with his napkin as daintily as an embarrassed debutante. "Yes, sir, that's true, all right," he said sheepishly.

"I've been thinking about this matter a lot, Mr. Harmon, and I believe you can do a great deal of good in this institution."

"Me?" Sphinx squirmed. It was gruesome to see a giant subjected to such torment. Malcolm suddenly felt very tender toward the big stiff.

"I am convinced of it," the doctor said with more than his usual volume. The fact that he had raised his voice made him conscious of the others in the room. He turned to Malcolm. "What do you think of the moral situation on the campus, Mr. Leeds?"

The question was put too suddenly. Malcolm wiped a smile from his face and appeared reflective. "I hardly know, Doctor."

If he said it was bad the doctor would challenge him to help clean it up. If he said it was good the doctor would think him a leper. Besides, what would Marion think if he appeared concerned with student morals?

"Well, I certainly know," the doctor boomed. His voice took on that thunderous tone which made the young editor quake in his shoes and reflect that if anyone with such a voice believed in righteousness there must be something to it. "It is my conviction," the chancellor thundered again, this time on the left, "that I have never seen such flippancy, such wholesale disregard for, such wanton disregard for, things sacred and proper as prevails around this institution. I doubt that anything will clear up the air but a great revival of religion. What do you think, Mr. Leeds?"

Malcolm nodded his head and looked very serious. He found

that he was perspiring terribly. "I want to do what I can," he said as meekly as a penitent, and then fell to wondering how he could square himself with McKnight and his own conscience.

"Of course you do," the doctor hastened to say. "We all do. We all want to take a firm moral stand, don't we?"

Later in the drawing room, while Mrs. Dickey was lowering the shades and moving the chairs needlessly about and the doctor was showing Sphinx a set of Maclaren's *Expositions of the Holy Scripture*, Marion spoke softly to Malcolm.

"Don't mind Dad," she said, and there was something soothing in the way she said it. "He means well, but he's terribly old-fashioned—always worrying about people's morals and their religion."

Malcolm looked at her tenderly; it was his way of expressing reward for her marvelous understanding. "All right, little fairy," he said.

Marion smiled. He could not quite make out her smile, but it seemed coy if not sincere. "We can't talk longer now."

"But I must see you sometime," he insisted.

"Of course. But——"

"Do you ever go to town?"

"Certainly I do, silly."

From across the room the voice of the doctor sounded out: "I was just showing Mr. Harmon these valuable sets, Mr. Leeds. It's remarkable what . . ."

The doctor's words were lost in ecstasy as Malcolm walked through the air to where the two men stood. The evening had not been in vain, and it was only fair that he listen to the doctor, now that he had almost dated his lovely daughter. He fell energetically to imagining himself a courtier in the castle of his enemy, rapidly being seduced by the man's Sybaritic daughter. It was all so sublimely romantic. . . .

Then he was suddenly aware that the doctor had changed the subject and that he must give greater heed to his words. Out of the corner of his eye he saw Sphinx sidle over to Marion and Mrs. Dickey just as the doctor was saying:

"The fact is, Mr. Leeds, you occupy a tremendously important place in this university. Your relation to the good or ill of the

school is very obvious to me. There are probably a great many ways in which you and I might coöperate, don't you think?"

"Yes, sir, I think so, possibly," Malcolm said against the grain of his will. So this was the doctor's strategy?

"Yes, I'm sure there are, young man," the doctor roared on like a high-powered motor under a brightly polished hood. "I have been thinking, Mr. Leeds, that, as a matter of fact, the student paper ought by all means to have financial help from the institution. Indeed, I am somewhat surprised to find that it does not already receive this help. I am just at present working out a feasible plan which will remedy this and possibly afford some recompense, not adequate but at least some moderate recompense, to those who labor so hard on the production of the paper each week. I thought you would be interested to know that, Mr. Leeds."

"I am," Malcolm said, and for some reason which he could not explain himself, he felt very silly. "That's fine. Of course, it does take a lotta work."

"Oh, certainly. I realize that," Dr. Dickey shouted generously. "You young men ought to have some help, some recompense for your labors. Besides, I think, with our backing, you should be able to get out a better paper, don't you? Not that it isn't good now. It's splendid. But, I mean with more money you can do more things. You always can."

"Yes, that's certainly right." Malcolm wanted desperately to change the subject, but he could not think of anything else to talk about. He thought for a moment of switching back to the moral problem on the campus. Then, as the doctor lapsed into less vigorous talk, the young man fell to imagining again. This old man who kept annoying him was really an ogre, and he held the maiden yonder captive. She must be rescued. And as he looked at her and thought of her, he realized with some alarm how little he was genuinely concerned with the new administration and how utterly he was concerned with the new administration's daughter.

NINE

THERE was only one blot on the doctor's campaign plans for the revival: It would be impossible to have the ingathering until after the footoball season was over.

At first this realization vexed him greatly. He complained bitterly to Colonel Willingham, but the colonel explained patiently that it couldn't be done. There was a game scheduled for every Saturday. Some Saturdays the team would be away.

"And when they're home," the business manager observed, "there'll be too much excitement at night, I'm afraid." Things really were going hysterically well for the Mavericks that season, and there was nothing for the doctor to do but to fiddle helplessly while the campus burned in sin. He started to suggest canceling a game, but he stifled the suggestion as he would a yawn in chapel; that would never win the support of the students. Moreover, he wanted very badly to have Sphinx take a stand for righteousness, and this was so much a part of his strategy that he did not dare risk the campaign without some assurance that it would happen.

"I suppose," he finally decided, "that by postponing the meeting we shall have more time for cultural preliminaries."

Yet he yearned for the meeting to begin. The thought of postponement unsettled and disturbed him, not only because of his passion for souls but also because he needed at once a circus to satisfy the public curiosity. As the days passed and Warren still remained on the payroll, the failure of the new chancellor became increasingly obvious. And he had now to admit to himself if not to Virginia that a sensational display of executive power such as he had planned would be suicidal. He could not get rid of Warren publicly—he must do it privately. Later on he might act vigorously; just now he must be clever and work with finesse the plan he had laid.

And of course the thought of the revival was clever enough. If only he could have had it at the time planned, the noise of unloosed tongues at Pentecost would have drowned out any gibbering scandal that might have started. As it was, he must

be exceedingly careful. Like a wrinkled chess fiend he hesitated long and earnestly, then moved at last.

"Marion," he said one evening after dinner, "how would you and your mother like to go for a drive?"

Marion looked at him a trifle suspiciously. "Are you going, Dad?"

"No. Why?"

"I just wondered." She smiled as though she were going to ask him any number of womanly questions. "Do you want Mother and me to go out so you can plan a campaign?"

"Something like that," he admitted, patting her shoulder. It was a way he had of getting her not to ask more questions.

"Why don't you ask Mother?"

"I thought it would be better if you suggested it, Daughter. You know how Mother is."

"Yes, I know. I'll see what I can do for you, Dad. I've got to go to the library by seven-thirty," she added.

"Well, you'll have plenty of time." He glanced at his watch and looked at her quizzically. "Does it close at that time or something?"

"Ah, Dad. You're funny. Gee," she went on, locking her hands about his neck and looking at him with mock pity, "it must be terrible to be a college president. You always look so *worried*, like an old dyspeptic."

"Do I? Then I'll have to be more careful, dear." He regarded her tenderly a moment and then thought of the business in hand. "Now see if you can't get your mother to go for a drive."

A few moments later the car backed out of the driveway. Marion waved to him as she shifted gears in the street, and he thought she winked at him in a large way. He was alone in the house now, save for Sarabelle. She was in the kitchen and, with apologies, he shut the kitchen door.

"You don't mind if I close this, do you, Sarabelle?" he asked. "I have some important 'phoning to do and I don't want to disturb you."

"Go right ahead, Docto'," she consented. "They's plenty of ventilation to-night, anyhow."

He closed the door softly and went to the 'phone. The elaborateness with which he planned his deed made it seem for a moment

particularly criminal, but he only smiled at the thought of his doing anything criminal.

"Long distance."

There was a moment of waiting, during which he removed his glasses and tapped the 'phone table gently with them.

"Long distance? . . . I want to speak with Senator James Cuthburt, Memphis, Tennessee. . . . No, I don't. You won't need any local address for him. . . . Dickey. . . . Yes, that's right. . . . Gasser 3217. . . . Yes. Now, can you rush that call through right away? It's very, very important. . . . All right, thanks."

. . . At last the voice with a smile announced triumphantly, "Here's your party. Go ahead."

"HELLO!" the doctor shouted.

"Hello," the echo came back.

"THIS YOU, JIM?" He strained his attention desperately for the answer. What if it weren't Jim?

"Yeas. Whoosis?"

"This is Dickey. You remember? Dr. Dickey."

"Oh, yeah, sure," the voice came back and the doctor sighed. "How are you?"

"All right. Say, could you meet me in Birmingham Sunday?"

"Yes, I guess so. What's up?"

"Nothing much. Want to talk to you. How about the Tut-wiler? All right?"

"Yeah."

"All right. See you Sunday. Much obliged."

The doctor placed the receiver in its hook and sank back exhausted. He sighed a mammoth sigh and fanned himself with a handkerchief, wiping the perspiration from his face and mopping around the edges of his collar. Everything was working out well enough. He must intercept the 'phone bill and pay it, or Virginia would want to know about his call, but that would be simple enough. He had done harder things. As it stood, nothing remained to do but to write the Baptist pastor at Birmingham and let him know that Chancellor Dickey of Martha Sumner would be in town on Sunday next and no one would have any occasion to suspect the reason for his presence there.

II

"Guess what's happened?"

Malcolm Leeds sank into a chair in the Rawlings-Morse apartment and ran his fingers melodramatically through his hair; his hair was already rumpled from having done that several times before that same evening. Janet lay on a calico couch, propped up by glazed chintz pillows, reading *The Triumph of Death*. She suspended a firm cloud of smoke from her lips, sniffed it back into her nostrils, and said with pitiless indifference:

"Well, what has?"

"I suppose you're incapable of excitement," Malcolm said scornfully.

"Not entirely," she replied, "but I must say your mere presence doesn't excite me any more. What's the news?"

Malcolm looked about the room as though seeking a means of escape. Amon Kibler, a young Jew who had somehow got himself appointed instructor in English during Meacham's careless administration, sat reading "Americana" from the copy of the *Mercury* he had picked up off Janet's table. "Yes, out with it, Leeds," he commanded.

"Warren's leaving," Malcolm announced in such measured tones that his voice shook.

"The hell you say," Kibler exclaimed, leaning forward like an enraged broker.

"Well, you're not surprised, are you?" Janet inquired.

"No, I'm not surprised," Kibler retorted. "But——" He leaned back pained and thoughtful. "I guess I'll be next." There was the squirm of the martyr in his movements as he settled among the cushions.

"Yes," Janet observed, "I suspect the chancellor lies awake nights trying to figure out how he can get rid of you, Amon. Tell us the details, Malcolm. Was he fired?"

"Well, no," Malcolm admitted in a tone which belied his chagrin. "That's the funny part about it. He wasn't. He just got a better job."

"Well, congratulations. Amon, I suppose you're afraid that will happen to you."

Amon ignored her and turned to Malcolm. "What's he going to do?"

"Why, I don't know just precisely what he's going to do. But it's some kind of an important social work position over in Tennessee. He got an offer from the governor to head up a committee to investigate the prison farms, I think it is."

"Does he get more money?" Amon inquired.

"A little. That's the rub. The salary isn't much bigger, and so Warren went to the chancellor and put the proposition up to him. Dickey hemmed and hawed a lot, but he wouldn't raise Warren's salary to keep him."

"The mean old thing!" Janet wailed, snuffing out her cigarette in a large shell on the smoking table.

"Well, I think it is pretty raw," Malcolm complained in great seriousness. "After all, when a man gets a definite offer from another state it's a pretty sure sign he's worth a lot to the university."

"What did Dickey say about the salary?" Amon asked eagerly.

"Just said there wasn't anything doing. Said all the appropriations would have to be cut sooner or later and he couldn't see a raise."

The three were silent for a moment, then Amon remarked, "Well, I guess there's nothing to do now but to get ready for the hog wallow."

"Yeah, I reckon you're right," Malcolm sighed and agreed.

"And do you know who's going to do the preaching?"

"No, Mr. Editor," Janet replied. "Who is?"

"Horace Ethelmore Dickey. And that's a fact."

"Isn't that extraordinary!" Amon ejaculated, as though that was the first time he had used the idiom. "It's so easy to forget America," he went on, sinking back once more and picking up the *Mercury*. "That's why I like 'Americana.' Now, listen to this: 'Evidence of the higher learning in the Bible belt as given by the——'"

"We've all read that, Amon. Don't let's have it again," Janet begged. "To hear anything twice from the *Mercury* makes me conservative. So Dickey's going to do the preaching, is he? You know," she reflected, "I don't think you boys realize how clever Dickey is."

"He isn't clever," Amon protested vehemently. "He's just so amazingly stupid that no one will ever believe it. He gets by because no one ever suspects that he has done what he has. Take this Warren matter. I'll bet there's no telling what he has done."

"Couldn't you be a little vaguer?" Janet asked with great courtesy and solicitude.

"Well, I don't know what he has done, but I wouldn't be surprised. And take this revival meeting. Now, who wants his soul saved from hell in this day and time?"

"No one that I know of," Janet answered. "But don't let's argue."

"Ah, this revival's just a lot of blah," Leeds observed with bitter cynicism. "The doctor don't believe in it any more than I do."

"I think you're wrong there," Janet told him. "I don't think I'd say things like that. It makes you seem so innocent."

"I don't believe there is any such thing as the soul," Amon went on insistently. "I think the soul has a purely physiological explanation."

"Mine has," Janet agreed. "Don't let's argue, please."

"I'm not arguing," Amon contended. "I merely say that the entity which the Christians call the soul is really non-existent—in fact, never had existence," Amon dared them further. "There's not one shred of evidence to be offered for its existential reality."

"Ah, hell, Amon. Shut up," Malcolm ordered. "Janie, do you really think Dickey's sincere?"

"Certainly he is, Malcolm. When you learn a little more, you'll learn that most of us are sincere. We may be deluded and maniacal, but we're generally sincere."

"That may account for the Christian argument about the soul," Amon soliloquized. "But I think the basic concept which forms the foundation for the whole Christian ideology is, after all——"

"You know, Amon," Malcolm interrupted, "I wonder if there is anything phoney about Warren's leaving?"

"Sure there is." Amon remarked confidently, easily deflected from his philosophy by the turn of the conversation to any one of his ideas.

"Maybe there is and maybe there isn't," Janet put in. "I think

that's a question which you boys could settle better in the moonlight. You'd better go before the curfew rings."

III

It was not many days before Warren had smelled a rat, and his temperature began at once to mount. He gathered his students about him in the hut where he lived, entertaining them like so many pilgrims while he lay on his cot and smoked Mexican cigarettes and bitterly bewailed his persecution. He began to see in the doctor's curtailment a dire conspiracy aimed not merely at him but at the liberal cause, at the New Pedagogy, at Democracy itself. And the chancellor's refusal to give him a raise in the face of such nation-wide recognition as he had got he regarded as nothing short of a plutocratic slap in the mouth. For a while it actually seemed that the embattled students would lay violent hands on the university property if their young professor were not given a raise. But the doctor stood steadfast and gradually Warren came to see more and more of a service he could render among the poor whites of Tennessee. It so happened, then, that when the chancellor sent all the members of the faculty a questionnaire to determine the degree of their orthodoxy, Jackson Warren defiantly refused to sign it and announced to the world that he had accepted a new and more important position. The *Lasso* mourned the passing of the great liberal and the students circulated petitions of protest. But the following Saturday the husky Mavericks walked all over the pen of the Arkansas Razorbacks for the first time in three years, and with the prospect of beating Tate so acute Warren was gradually if reverently forgotten.

IV

Meanwhile the season rolled brilliantly on to the great Thanksgiving game. The biting, squealing Mavericks plunged and reared and stamped to victory time and time again. They lost only two games, one to State and the other to Carrington College, though it was a matter of common knowledge that the latter school hired ringers unscrupulously and had nothing short of a professional squad. All in all the prospect was gorgeous as the annual classic

with Tate approached, and the chancellor found his impatience for the beginning of the revival somewhat quieted by his growing interest in the fortunes of the team.

For the truth was that the spectacular success of the Mavericks had an effect far wider than merely on the undergraduates. Simeon Hawk's elation reached fever pitch, and he confided time and time again to the chancellor that the season was worth several millions in cold and solid cash. Colonel Willingham showed similar signs of apoplexy and worked with the haste of a beaver to get everything in readiness for a gala event when the Mavericks met Tate at Thanksgiving.

All through the season it was the marvelous Sphinx—the sturdy, stony Egyptian, the Inspired Mummy, Rambling Rameses, Terrible Tut, as he was variously called by affectionate sports writers—that bore the brunt of the Maverick attack. He was in every game, and he stood out head and shoulders above the performers in every play of the season. Martha Sumner had never had such a celebrity within its borders before, and it woke up before half the season was gone to find that its star full back was the talk of the South. The redoubtable and irresistible Sphinx Harmon was either ploughing through the line like a snow shovel or circling ends with speed that made the other players seem like one of those slowed-down motion pictures, or hurtling the ball accurately into the belly of some obscure receiver. It was said with good reason that Sphinx could drive a nail with a football at fifty yards. He was known throughout the country as a “quadruple threat man,” for he could gash a line, circle an end, kick with the vigor of a mule and the aim of a Brickley, and pass to every section of the field.

In his immediate locale he got more and more attention. Sports writers could hardly mention him in a play-by-play account of the game without some parenthetical reference to his excellence. . . . “Taking the ball on the Mavericks’ twelve-yard line, Sphinx Harmon, terrible and titillating Typhoon of the Black and Crimson, tore down the field like a madman, smashing the heads of opposing players as he went.” . . . Or a lead would begin, “Working the havoc of the Vandal upon the shattered defense of Phillips University and dealing injury and capturing yardage with every step of his march, Sphinx Harmon, stellar giant of

the Maverick aggregation, led Coach Bud Wilson's team almost single-handed to victory here this afternoon." . . . "Ivan the Terrible got loose again here this afternoon . . ."

Colonel Willingham, who kept a scrapbook of the season's proceedings, showed the doctor clippings from practically every paper in the country as the season neared its close. Knute Rockne heard of Sphinx and mentioned his name in a syndicated column he was writing, and when Sphinx stood behind his own goal post in the Tulane encounter and punted the ball thirty yards over the Tulane safety on the fly and over the Tulane goal on the third bounce, that one feat "made" every big metropolitan sport page something during the next week. The New York *American* carried a picture of Sphinx entitled, "The Colossus with the feet of a mule"; the *Telegram* ran a special picture of Sphinx toddling little Tommy Orr on his knee. Colonel Willingham laughed when he showed Dr. Dickey the pictures and said the young man Harmon ought to have a salary.

V

The game that year was played at Tate. Colonel Willingham wanted painfully to change it to Oil City and have a gorgeous homecoming event, but the Tate officials would not consent, so the colonel decided to have the homecoming anyway at the seat of Martha Sumner's ancient rival. He trumpeted the news abroad among all the alumni organizations and ordered the gathering of the clans at the camp of the enemy. Fully half of the seats in the Tate Stadium were reserved by Martha Sumner athletic authorities, and then the colonel and his minions set about to fill them.

It wasn't hard. The first step was to announce that Mrs. Professor Stimson had consented to act as official chaperon for the student party. Mrs. Professor Stimson had an extraordinary reputation for indulgence; she had also a reassuring air with the parents she met, and while there were whispers among the members of the University Women's Club, that was to be expected. Mrs. Dickey, of course, spoke to Horse about the matter:

"I should think, Horse," she said one evening when Marion had left the table, "that you would stop this ridiculous Mrs.

Stimson from chaperoning the trains to Tate. She is really very unprincipled."

"My dear," Horse protested, "you know I could not stop her now without a row among the faculty. It would be a very bad move for me to make."

"Then why did you ever allow her to be appointed in the first place?"

"I didn't, exactly. I can't spend all my time over pesky details. I must leave some of that work to Willingham. He had already appointed her before I knew anything about it."

"Well, I certainly think something ought to be done."

"Well, I don't know anything that can be," he replied with as much finality as he ever used with Virginia. "Besides, what leads you to believe she is, well, not a good chaperon?"

Mrs. Dickey looked at him pityingly. "Nothing *leads* me to believe it, Horse. When I speak on things of that kind, I generally know what I'm talking about. She has a very unsavory reputation."

"Tush! Tush!" the doctor shamed, munching a crumb that remained on his dessert plate. It was not that he approved the woman's unsavory reputation, but that he resented criticism of even his proxy appointments. Virginia closed the conversation by creasing her napkin so hard that the table creaked.

Three weeks in advance of Thanksgiving the machinery for the trip began to move. "Trek to Tate" was the motto which the effervescent John Tippy, varsity yell leader, had designed with a yell leader's customary love of alliteration. "Trek to Tate" was emblazoned all over the bulletin boards, on cars, on the windows of the dormitory, on sidewalks, on the glasses of near-by soda fountains, and Chancellor Dickey even found the command pasted on the door of his office and on his desk. The *Lasso*, yielding, as Malcolm Leeds explained, to the pressure of public demand, took up the cry, putting the words in the dog-ears of the front page each week and using them as fillers throughout the columns. Malcolm explained to Janet that he was being faintly satirical about it all, but the students never suspected. He carried a special series of articles on "How To Make Pin Money for that Trek to Tate." Under this caption were photographs of sundry students who had resorted to ingenious ways of raising money, ways which

might be duplicated or excelled. There was a picture of Andy Gaff, Sigma Nu, and a paragraph about him as follows:

Andy began yesterday to walk to classes every day and to ride the street car to town. Why? He's saving coin and gas for that Trek to Tate. With the assistance of Professor Wilson of the Department of Mathematics, Andy figured out that he could save enough gas between now and Thanksgiving to take him to Tate. If the game goes the way he expects, he'll have no difficulty in getting back.

There was also a picture of Fish Newberry, who looked like a caricature of a bookworm:

And here is Freshman Newberry—serious, earnest, single-minded. You'd never think that this young man would go to desperate lengths to make that Trek to Tate. But wait! The young man has confessed. Yesterday he sold all of his textbooks to a dealer downtown for enough cash to get to Tate and half-way back. "I went through all my books," he explained, "and took extensive notes on them. In the future I shall pay very close attention to the lectures and get by somehow."

Those who wrote home for money or pawned their watches and overcoats got no attention; it was only the stirring deeds that were recorded; and by the time the hour for the trip approached, the campus was like a community suddenly thrown into preparation for war. A contingent of the more venturesome and impecunious left on assorted freight trains two days before the game, having carefully hoarded cuts for the occasion. Still others left in automobiles at all hours from midnight on till six on Thanksgiving morning. Three boys and three girls dressed as boys had started on the Sunday before to hitch-hike their way through.

But the bulk of the delegates were scheduled to go by special trains. Each of these comprised a smoking coach and nine Pullmans and was scheduled to leave Oil City the night before the game. On the first section would ride the Greeks with the spirited John Tippy and the members of the Maverick Club and the gayly bedecked Martha Sumner band. On the second section the hilarious barbs had reservations, and on the third would be

members of the faculty and certain of the more sober-minded students.

Of course everyone wanted to ride on the first section, and since the trains pulled out of the big Union Station at Oil City, everybody's chances were about even. The band played rollicking tunes, and John Tippy led in yells, as conscious as a street preacher of the effect his antics had on the curious throng of onlookers in the waiting room. Then the gates were opened to those holding tickets to the first section.

There was an instant scramble, and the crowd crashed the gates—men, girls, and members of the band rushing pell-mell for berths. The frightened porters offered some resistance, but they were trampled, and within the space of five minutes the entire Martha Sumner crowd, along with a score of gamins who had joined in the sport, had possession of the first section. Mrs. Professor Stimson, aided by the two seniors she had selected to chaperon the other sections, stood wringing her hands in one of the vestibules. The students had piled indiscriminately into berths, pulling the curtains securely to after them. The first curtain which the enraged conductors parted revealed a member of the band with his big bass drum, two co-eds frightened half out of their wits, and three freshmen in loud green caps. And the whole train, save for the occasional toot of a big horn, was as quiet as death.

There was really nothing, the conductors and trainmen decided after a score of futile attempts to dislodge the ensconced enemy, that could be done about it. At last these trainmen, weary of chasing from one car to another, sank into a heap in one of the smoking rooms and with their remaining breath cursed the benedictions of modern education. The station master was summoned. For a while he seemed inclined to turn in a riot call, but on second thought—and after he had been hit by three pillows on a trip through one of the cars—he came to the sane conclusion that, after all, the railroad had the money for the tickets and that it would simply cut down on the overhead to operate one train rather than three. It also occurred to him that the faculty, being not quite so barbaric, might show their tickets. Accordingly he made arrangements to let them into the tracks, herded

them all into one car, switched that car onto the first section, and ordered the conductor to give the high-ball.

So it was that the seething, determined students left for Tate in one section instead of three, hampered only by the presence of a car of faculty members. Young Tippy, of course, got word of the presence of the enemy in his rear, and, like the good general that he was, stationed guards at the exit of the faculty car. When, for any reason whatever, a member of the faculty showed his head, he was set upon by assassins with pillows, and in this Spartan way the pass was protected.

As soon as the train got on its way the greatest possible merriment prevailed. John Tippy swore that none on the train should sleep that night and, heading a band of restless Maverick rooters, he traipsed up and down the aisles, back and forth through the trains, shouting, singing, leading cheers, saying very funny things to those in the upper berths, pulling aside the curtains of sleeping compartments and dumping their occupants on the floor. No one was immodest enough to undress, though John Tippy considerably arranged it so that the chaperons could go to bed in the customary Pullman fashion. When Mrs. Professor Stimson returned from the dressing room in her gray silk kimono, someone hit her with a pillow, but that was all that happened until she got in bed. Then she lifted a scream, leaped out of the berth, and dashed through the aisle in her nightgown. There was, she explained to Tippy, who came running solicitously in, a snake in her bed; and she refused to return to it until he had coaxed the reptile out. "You oughtn't to drink so much of that stuff," Tippy admonished her.

Next morning all of the boys—even those who had slept five males in a berth—boasted of all kinds of bacchanalian revelries the night before.

And yet, what was sex to the prospect before them? Out onto the village streets the rooters emptied, whooping and cavorting like drunken Bedouins. Tate was a sleepy little town, but it had bad dreams that day. Never before had there been such a delegation. To the courthouse square the army of the higher learning marched, and on the historic courthouse steps they lifted their voices in hurrah after hurrah for the glory of Martha Sumner. Then the band played "Dear Old Martha Sumner U.," and

there was a moment of awesome silence, followed by an uproar greater than before.

Toward noon the advance guard began to be reinforced by cohort after cohort of alumni. Cadillacs, Packards, and Pierce Arrows came bowling into town. It was all very gala. Puffy men in nobby clothes carried natty canes with black and crimson colors attached, and their sleek, chubby wives wore diamond garters decked tastefully in black and crimson. The automobile traffic became even denser as the hour of the game approached, and every one of them bore the picture of a cavorting, wild-eyed yearling—the symbol of Martha Sumner University. It was indeed the gathering of the clans, and half an hour before the Mavericks came onto the field a roaring army of enthusiasts filled the section which Colonel Willingham had reserved in the Tate stands.

VI

If the game that afternoon was a disappointment, the celebrated Sphinx was not. He kept the howling throng which filled the shaky stands and spilled out onto the side lines in a constant state of nervous admiration, fear, and hilarity. Tate won, and by winning annexed its seventh straight Thanksgiving victory. But Sphinx did all he could. He received the kick-off and ran the ball back to Tate's twenty-yard line before he was downed by three tugging hounds. On the next play he outguessed his foe and placed a drop kick squarely between the posts for the first three points of the game.

When Tate received, however, they began at once a brilliant attack which was too much for the Mavericks, and though Sphinx threw himself time and time again into the breach and the wiry little Tommy Orr supported him as safety, the Tate Foxes bore steadily down the field until they scored a touchdown and easily kicked goal from placement. Then everyone fell to cursing Tommy Orr for his execrable judgment in ordering a place kick a few moments before when he could just as easily have had a touchdown.

The final score was 21 to 17. In the third period Tommy Orr got loose and slipped like a ghost through the entire Tate defense before they knew he was on the field. Then the stands declared

him the greatest broken-field runner the game had produced. And in the fourth period Sphinx opened with a plunging attack from the Mavericks' thirty-yard line that carried the Mavericks across with flying colors. First he made ten yards off right tackle. Then he made twenty off left tackle. Then he went around end for eighteen yards and was practically loose when he stumbled. Then Tommy tried to gain and failed and on the next play Sphinx took a delayed pass and put the ball within four yards of the goal. He slashed off right tackle on the next down and scored.

There were still three minutes to play. Tate received and a few downs later fumbled the ball. The Mavericks recovered on the Foxes' thirty-eight-yard line. Sphinx tore off right tackle for three yards. Another back failed to gain around left end, and Sphinx made the first down by two successive plunges off left tackle. The strain was beginning to tell upon even "the tireless Titan," however. On the next play Tommy Orr, running desperately, was thrown for a loss of four yards. On the second down, with fifty seconds to play, Sphinx drove with gritted teeth and lunging shoulders at right tackle. The line broke; he lunged against one of his own men, rebounded, and, like a hunted animal, tore blindly in the direction of the Tate goal. For a moment he was free. The stands screamed. Two coaches bit their lips until the blood ran; weary substitutes leaped up with the eagerness of strong men rejoicing to run a race. Sphinx was off! It was all over too quickly to see the giant's speed slacken a trifle and to wonder why he slackened, but a towering back hit him from behind and he sprawled, panting and desperate, ten yards from the goal. On the next play he passed desperately but a waiting Tate back slapped the ball viciously to the ground.

"Well, we'll get 'em next year," everyone said, but it sounded a little hollow when Colonel Willingham said it fiercely to Dr. Dickey as they filed out of the stands. They had driven over together and now they faced the long drive back. The doctor found that he was strangely exhausted. It was as though he himself had made that last futile but magnificent run. He tried to rest himself as he walked to the car, but he could not dismiss the game from his mind. He had never seen such a daring and superb spectacle as the plunging, lunging, speeding figure of the Sphinx. Thousands of eyes had been centered upon him. Every young

man and woman in the institution would have him for an idol. He was, the doctor had to admit, the most important man in the university. And he realized that if his high resolve to clean up the moral life of the campus were to become a reality, Sphinx must be the bellwether who led the way.

THE revival, when it finally came after the holidays, turned out better than even the prayerful doctor had dared hope. Within the first few days whiffs of its influence had reached every nook and cranny of the campus. It was one colossal fumigation, penetrating even the dark recesses of the School of Religion and herding the rebellious disciples of Dean Keith into a stampede for righteousness.

Everywhere the spirit of Lent prevailed. Fraternity houses were purified by the sudden smoke of the sacrifice. Dances for the week were considerably postponed, and the older brothers in most of the chapters declared openly in the sacred councils that the noisy petting of freshmen girls on the front porch would have to stop for a while. Bootleggers congregated in downtown rendezvous to shake their heads at the specter which threatened their best trade. On the whole, the revival seemed to be accomplishing what the doctor wanted it to. The field was really white unto the harvest. Willingham had seen to that. He had accomplished what the doctor called the "cultural preliminaries" with a thoroughness that left absolutely no stone unturned which might have beneath it a worm for the Fisher of Men. Every class, including the graduate students, had been organized around the inevitable saintly few, and organized so adroitly that the spirit of service spread like leprosy until it became an epidemic which even the most ungodly could not escape without making themselves the prey of howling packs of personal workers. Recitation periods were curtailed to make room for the lengthy morning service. The faculty had been asked by Dean Banks to lighten all work and had responded by practically suspending all assignments. A few perverse professors kept the heavy schedule operating, but their effrontery met with such amazement and such a sense of injustice on the part of the students that they either gave it up voluntarily or were asked to do so by the dean.

II

Most of this had happened before the peak of the revival's glory. It was to last a week and on Friday morning the chancellor sat down to reflect. The results so far, neatly tabulated and laid upon his desk, exceeded in every particular the objectives which the Preparation Committee of Faculty and Students had so ambitiously set. The doctor whistled softly when he saw them.

128 conversions and reclamations.

68 volunteers for service in foreign lands.

41 consecrations for service in the homeland.

And two important items could not be listed, though he was sure they had resulted: The spiritual and moral life of the student body had been greatly quickened; and faculty strife and bickering were at an end and the university family dwelling together as brothers in the Lord. He had silenced the prophets of Baal, for he had called down fire from heaven while they gnashed their teeth and howled in vain against him.

But there was one sad and gaping failure. The mighty Sphinx was yet unreclaimed. He had attended an occasional service and had listened respectfully while the doctor expounded the word; but he stood unmoved and stolid when personal workers attacked him in the after-service, and he looked more and more immobile as the invitation hymns increased in sentimentality. On Wednesday night his failure to respond had been conspicuous and had at last somewhat disturbed the service. Everyone in the vast throng stood craning his neck to see if the Tireless Titan, the Inspired Mummy, the Terrible Tut, would give way and walk down the aisle. The best personal workers vied with each other, and it became a public competition for the grand prize.

Results that night were noticeably less than they had been before. The first baptism of the spirit was over, and it began to look as though the great ship of God would flounder within sight of the port of triumph. The doctor was acutely disturbed. The next morning Sphinx was not there, and an air of listlessness hung over the crowd. Some of the students could be detected studying or reading. The crowd was thinner, and the sounds of

fraternity whistles and shrill giggles floated through the chapel window from cars and revelers outside. Not a soul responded to the invitation.

The doctor was not deluded. He saw what he had seen so often in revival campaigns before. One man stood in the way of a multitude. If that one man moved, the others would follow. Until he did the battle was in vain. He called several of the best personal workers to meet him in his office after the service. There was a season of prayer, and the group agreed to meet again during the afternoon in one of the men's rooms and pray prevailingly for the salvation of one man—and that man was Sphinx Harmon.

"This thing ought not to be made personal," the doctor said as they were preparing to go. Several of the men brushed dirt from their knees guiltily. "But I believe the Lord has commanded us to win Harmon. Everything depends upon that. Be discreet but be firm, and above all be prayerful."

The doctor could never quite get the straight of what followed. He heard it in a twisted version from too many sources. One thing seemed pretty well established, however, and that was that Sphinx had received the holy delegation in his room with a great deal of profanity and, when they were reluctant to leave, had thrown and shoved the last one of them out into the hall. Marion heard from the girls that Sphinx had broken a chair over the head of the president of the Y. M. C. A. Willingham said Sphinx resented the invasion of his privacy when he was trying to study. One of the young men who was present told the doctor he had never heard such a string of oaths in his life and that Sphinx rushed at the lot of them like the Gadarene maniac. Hawk got it from Tommy Orr that Sphinx had threatened to jump out his window if his tormentors did not withdraw and that they fled in fright. A freshman in the same hall said he heard a commotion in Sphinx's room and that when he arrived the entire group of Christians were astride the neck of the athlete, but that Sphinx, with a mere twitch of his muscles and with the strength of ten Samsons, arose and threw the lot of them off him and later chased them into the hall and slammed the door.

At least a hundred versions of the affair were current on the campus that night, and the meeting showed the result. Sphinx was not in the crowd, as each member of it assured himself by a

Careful inspection of everyone else present. The doctor preached from the text, "Every man a beam," but with no result save a good deal of embarrassment to himself and those who understood his exegesis. The service on Friday night closed without a single conversion, and the doctor went home utterly discouraged.

The chancellor realized that he must have a face-to-face encounter with the Sphinx; yet he put off the disagreeable task in a manner for which he would have condemned a sinner roundly, and he was greatly relieved and even mildly hilarious when Colonel Willingham called him on Saturday afternoon and promised to have it out with the intractable athlete.

III

If anyone could land Sphinx, the colonel could do it. Certainly it was only logical that he as patron saint of the star should try, for was it not he who had brought the temperamental hippo to this Hollywood of football? It was. And it was he who most understood and appreciated the real nature of his charge. If Sphinx kicked down a door on occasion, he did it good-naturedly and with healthy gusto. He was a statue to strength, a living cartoon of vitality, a man of such energy and physical power as to be entirely out of place on a civilized campus where boys drank Coca Cola and ate Eskimo pies. Tradition had it that he was part Indian; there was something remarkably agile about his movements and something spectacular about the glide with which he ran and the tirelessness of the man under great strain. Though he was essentially amiable, largely because he was so powerful that he could afford to be, he was also the least bit stolid and immobile—a grinning Sphinx.

On the gridiron Sphinx was a trained player, a broken ox, a performing lion. Early in youth a mathematics teacher in high school had spotted him as a marvel and had worked on him with such outstanding success that Fatty Harmon, as he was then, came to accept football and consequently school as a normal part of existence. Not that he liked the game; he played with none of that intense, girlish anxiety which marked his fellows; he played often with indifference and ennui, but he knew that he was expected to do it, and he did it well.

An all-state man in high school, he would probably have been lassoed by any number of colleges had it not been for the outbreak of the war. Harmon enlisted and came at once to realize his full value as a football player. He became the crack full back of the Thirty-sixth Division and the talk of the A. E. F. He played among older college stars and outplayed the lot of them, so that when the armistice was signed and there was no more football to be played, Harmon looked about the least bit wistfully for more worlds to conquer.

Of course he did not have to look long. Offers of the most fabulous nature, all of which he regarded in the most matter-of-fact way, began to flood the mails of his little New Mexico home. It was rumored that alumni from Arkansas had offered board, tuition, clothing, and, tacitly, a B. A. degree; that Georgia Tech had sent a clubman clear across the continent with the authority to double any offer he had already received; that Southern Methodist had offered a straight salary of such proportions that Fatty Harmon eyed the bald-headed ambassador with grave suspicion in his boyish eyes; that Carnegie Tech and New York University had topped all others by proffering similar guarantees and by promising in addition to see that the mighty Harmon got 500 columns of newspaper space during his career. Another rumor was that Iowa, hearing of this overture, had sent an ambassador who had equaled it and brought a signed contract for the movies along to boot.

The result of it all was simply to mystify the celebrated full back of the A. E. F. He batted his eyes in childish wonder and hung around the corner drug store and dreamed and chewed tobacco and showed his offers or lied about them until well into August. He would tell the Baylor man that Southern Methodist had offered to pay his transportation, whereupon the Baylor representative, so rumors said, had promised to send a closed car to transport the hero down to Waco. It got to be a game with Fatty Harmon, one that he enjoyed to the uttermost, and he dreaded in his stupid way the hour when he must make a decision.

It was toward the close of August that the dapper little Colonel Willingham put in his appearance at Portales. He bumped into Fatty at the drug store and bought him a drink; then he fell to

talking football and told of the days when he was quarter back on the team that beat Tulane. Sphinx bragged of his various offers, but that did not seem to impress the colonel in the least; Willy just smiled in a knowing way and made some reference to wealthy alumni at Oil City. Then by degrees he began to take charge of Fatty Harmon, and Fatty liked it.

Willingham was the first man with enough ordinary intelligence to see that what Fatty wanted was someone to make up his mind, that what he liked most of all was a mental valet. The other agents grew shrill and insistent when they saw how the method worked, but Fatty only smiled and followed Willy out of town like a sheep. It was the very stuff to have this nice man with a red mustache take charge of all his things and make all the arrangements for taking him off to school. He consented gladly, quietly, and with resignation.

On the campus he had maintained that same dogged loyalty, adjusting himself with the colonel's help to the ardors and restraints of what seemed to him an overcivilized society. When in the fury of the freshman-sophomore rush he sent five second-year men to the hospital single-handed and the colonel spoke to him gently about it, the Sphinx promised solemnly never to do it again. He was gladly coöperative if only he were told what to do.

It was clear that Colonel Willingham had something important to say to him the Saturday afternoon of the week of the revival. They had driven out in the colonel's car a mile or so south of the university; the colonel pulled a fresh cigar from his pocket and lighted it contemplatively.

"Sphinx."

"Yeah, Colonel." The athlete could not smoke, but he dug a cake of chewing tobacco from his hip pocket and bit off a sizable wad. "Anything wrong?"

The business manager inhaled deeply with a sigh. "I think it's about time you were getting converted," he said.

Sphinx grinned.

"I'm serious," the colonel went on, shifting about on his chubby buttocks and pulling one leg up on the seat. "I think you better get converted."

Sphinx looked quizzically at a cow who had moseyed up to the fence by the road and now stood regarding them with frightened

interest. She was chewing her cud mechanically, and unconsciously the athlete adjusted the movements of his jaws to the rhythm she set.

"But lissen, Colonel," he said. "I'm all right. Sure 'nuff. I haven't done anything bad lately. I'm a lot better'n I used to be. Why, goddam, you'd think I was an angel goin' around behavin' the way I do."

"Oh, I know, Sphinx," the colonel soothed, spanking the ashes of his cigar with his finger. "Don't get me wrong. You're all right. But, you see, it's Dickey. He's got queer ideas. He thinks if he can land you the whole student body will be saved."

"Be what?"

"Be saved. Converted. Made Christian and all that. Dickey thinks you're the most important fellow on the campus."

"Well, ain't I?" The athlete grinned and squirted a thread of tobacco juice half across the road.

"Sure. That's why he's after you. The meeting will be a failure to him if you don't step out. And Dickey's worth thinking about."

"But I don't see what's the use of goin' down there and givin' the old man your hand and tellin' him you're gonna live for Christ with a bunch of other hypocrites," Sphinx complained. "All that makes me sicker'n a pulin' calf. I'd rather just be good."

"That's all right," the colonel answered. "But I'm just asking a personal favor for me and the chancellor. You'll do it for us, won't you?"

The light of understanding began gradually to spread over the athlete's face. "Oh, yeah," he said agreeably, "if it's as important as all that. If it's a personal favor to you and the old man I'll be glad to do it. Sure. When do you want me to go?"

"To-night, I'm afraid."

Sphinx quailed and swallowed hard.

"Couldn't I just wait till to-morrow night?" he begged.

"You better go to-night," Willingham urged gently. "Dickey's expecting you."

"Expecting me? What do you mean?" There was genuine alarm in his tone now.

"Oh, nothing. He just keeps thinking you'll come."

"You haven't framed up on me, have you?" Sphinx asked suspiciously.

"Oh, no. Of course not, Sphinx. The old man's just crazy to have you come. You know how it is."

"Well, I wouldn't want to disappoint him, I reckon," the Tarzan of full backs said generously. "How do I do?"

"You just wait till he gives the invitation a time or two and then go down and give him your hand."

"Do I have to stay and kneel down there and wallow?"

"No, you just stay a minute or two."

Sphinx squared his shoulders resolutely. "All right, Colonel. Orders is orders." He saluted awkwardly, and then his face clouded again. "But I'll tell you one thing: I'm gonna whip the first bastard that god-blesses me."

"No, you be careful about that, Sphinx. Don't get yourself into any more trouble. Things are pickin' up for you on this campus, and the place is going to be worth hanging around before long."

"It sure is a helluva funny place," Sphinx commented in bewilderment.

The business manager spat enthusiastically over the side of the car and started the motor. "Well," he said as he pushed the control into low, "it's worth staying around. You just wait and see if it isn't."

IV

The final consecration service of the revival was a spectacle never to be forgotten. A huge, expectant throng awaited the doctor as he brushed the dust from his knees and stepped out onto the platform of the university chapel. The morning service had shown life; the results were not enormous, but apparently the curious crowd of students had momentarily forgotten Sphinx, and the spirit of the service was good. Besides, Willingham assured him that Sphinx had surrendered and would take a public stand in the evening service. While the doctor did not wish to think of the theatrical effect, he had handled evangelistic crowds enough to know that, if Sphinx came forward, there would not be a sinner left in the house. He must, he told himself for the fiftieth time, have Sphinx for the Lord.

The crowd before him was one of the greatest he had ever

seen. Hundreds shouldered eagerly through the doors, content with standing room. Almost momentarily the doctor expected to see the roof torn open and a lame man let down upon a pallet. Student ushers with white bands on their arms marshaled the crowd with spiritual efficiency and at last gave up in confusion and withdrew to put chairs in the aisles. How the doctor wished his brethren in the ministry could see this superlative gathering! Everything moved smoothly, despite the ripple of confusion. It all seemed according to plan and purpose—a microcosm of which he was the directing intelligence.

Then the great organ behind him filled the temple with martial melody, and three thousand voices asserted in angelic unison, "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go, Dear Lord." Afterward the doctor heard as if from afar the clear, steady ring of his own voice in the evening prayer and felt the soft, trickly path of a tear as he lost himself in the heavenly ecstasy of intercessory petition. And 'way down within him he felt weak and desperate: he was praying for the salvation of one man.

His text he had chosen with great care and foresight. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." The body was really a temple; in many cases it was beautiful and powerful; and he could understand how the ancient Greeks worshiped it. The body had many great tasks. He was thrilled to see tugging warriors on the gridiron, giving their life and their blood for Alma Mater. The body should be ennobled and kept as a fit dwelling place for the spirit of man and the spirit of God. Any man's body was greater and more divine if he kept it clean and if he consecrated not only his mind and his heart but his body and its prowess to the glory of God. Sensual thoughts must be driven out and spiritual aspiration must be set in their place. . . .

The intangible flutter of confusion gave way to complete and rapt attention. Five thousand eyes were fixed steadily upon him. One by one heads dropped in silent prayer, and hither and yon handkerchiefs stole secretly to moistened eyes. The chancellor played upon the assembled host as he would upon an organ, with infinite technique and soul, now pressing the swell of the great diapason until the auditorium shook with something cosmic, now

shading to the tremolo and vox humana as he reminded them of Mother, Home, and Heaven. . . .

Then the after-service! Was there ever such a sight? Earnest students moved to places where unsaved friends faced what might be their last chance to make their peace with their Maker. Converts flocked to the altar. Movement, movement everywhere—a seething as of troubled waters with the Spirit of God brooding over all.

Eager, upturned faces around the chancel rail—faces of manly boys shaken by the great upheaval of repentance, faces of beautiful girls, the rouge awash on their tear-stained cheeks—all forsaking the sins of the flesh and consecrating their bodies to the service of the Lord.

It was magnificent, yet throughout it all the doctor riveted his eye on a tall and commanding figure at the back of the auditorium who stood resolutely, unmoved by the songs, untouched by the pleas of the personal workers, disdainful of the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart. Would he come?

The doctor signaled for the music to stop. There was not a sound save the wailing of mourners as he lifted his great voice in the words of a final challenge:

“My dear friends, there are some here to-night who ought to take this step for Jesus. It’s the manly thing to do. It’s the honorable thing to do. There are some here who have mothers waiting in heaven. You don’t want to disappoint them. You want to be counted when the final roll is called. I plead with you, in the name of One who suffered and died that you might live! Come now! Jesus is calling. Don’t delay.”

He waved his hand to the choir leader, and the last of his exhortation was lost in the plaintive, racking melody of “Jesus Is Tenderly Calling Thee Home.”

Then to the delight of half a dozen Y. M. C. A. workers who followed him proudly to the altar, the mighty Sphinx, Tarzan of full backs, lifted his tawny head in defiance and walked down the aisle to take the hand of the doctor. A moment later the elusive Tommy Orr followed in his steps, a little sheepish and a little irritable, but unswervingly, none the less.

The doctor met the star with a jubilant, “God bless you, my boy.” Sphinx mumbled something which sounded like “How de

do," and tumbled among the penitents. It was not a beautiful conversion, the doctor had to admit, for there was not the radiance on the face of the athlete he had often seen on the face of redeemed men. But he had got his man. He had broken down the greatest resistance, and Pentecost would follow.

Pentecost did come. The students poured in hordes to the altar, some crying, some stern faced, some defiant as Sphinx had been. But they came, and there resulted the most marvelous ingathering that the state had witnessed since its early days. At last the Coronation, and the building literally rocked with the boundless joy of redeemed men and women loosed in one prolonged musical shout for Jesus Christ, Lord of All, and His regenerating death and sacrifice. . . .

It was an event which the university would never forget. The doctor was sure of that as he lay down to sleep in the small hours of the morning. Every item of that gigantic scene lived graphically before him as he tossed upon his bed. Its slightest incident was ineffaceable. Time and again he dismissed the spectacle with finality, mad for rest, and time and again he found himself, ere he was aware of it, once more the center of that great occasion—exhorting, praying, singing, reënacting its every thought and detail. Yet underneath all his nervous recollection lay the sense of security, as real and as comforting as a water bottle against his back. He had given his enemies one full, final, and sufficient testimony of his worth. . . .

DEVIL'S DAM was a resort of dire reputation five miles to the north of Martha Sumner University. It derived its name from a huge dirt bank which encased a rather stagnant pond once owned by a man known as Devil Bert. Tiring of the arduous wooing of the soil, Mr. Bert had converted his pond into a tawdry pleasure spot by constructing a board walk along the east side of the pond and by importing several rowing boats and three wagonloads of sand for the artificial beach. His rambling house he converted into a restaurant of sorts, at first serving only hamburgers and soda pop to fat ladies and amorous couples who came out in automobiles from the city for a swim in the lake. But as business increased and the rigors of prohibition opened up more promising channels of revenue, he equipped one room of his house with a bar and arranged several private dining rooms for use after sundown. The place grew gayer with the passing of the days, and everyone in the neighborhood began to talk. Mrs. Bert, a shrill, hard-working woman of forty-five, fell out with her husband one evening and, after throwing an ax at his head, went back to her folks in Kentucky. Everyone said that Bert had been intimate with a waitress out from the city. Whatever the case, Bert could not run his establishment without his despicable and efficient wife. Trade wavered and slumped altogether; the bar grew filthy, and the house at large stank.

So it was that when Sol Barsoom, a greasy little Russian Jew, drove out from the city in his Ford one morning and offered Bert \$3,000 a year for full control of the place, Bert fell into a very jovial mood, took three drinks of straight gin, and held forth at great length on the superb qualities of the Hebrew race from Moses on down to Sol. The contract was executed at once, while Bert was yet drunk, and the next morning Sol took charge.

He painted the house a bright blue, persuading Bert that since both were to profit and he (Sol) must profit in order to pay the rent he (Bert) should help pay for the painting. It was agreed, for Bert was still drunk, and within three days the Devil's Dam Bathhouse was "diked out" in new clothes and ready for a

revived patronage. Bert left that afternoon with enough money to follow his wife to Kentucky.

Sol Barsoom, unwilling to rely upon casual couples to consume his liquors and rent his private dining rooms, went in strong for parties. He wheedled the De Molays into using the Bathhouse for their fall banquet, and though everything was decorous, each De Molay had the feeling that if he came back some other time he could do just about anything he pleased. There was splendid business for the rest of the month from this one party, and Sol, enterprising Oriental and entrepreneur that he was, looked around for other parties.

From one of his bootleggers he learned to his great joy that there was a chapter of Kappa Beta Theta in Martha Sumner University. Sol could scarcely believe it, but when he approached Biff Payne one night when Biff and a blonde were dining at a table in his rendezvous, Biff told him it was on the straight.

Sol broached the matter of a party as tactfully as his eagerness would permit, and when Biff said he would take the matter up pronto with the gang, Sol told the waiter to take no pay from him; and when Biff appeared puzzled upon leaving, Sol approached and waved him out with great salaams of generosity.

That is how it came about that on the Saturday night following the revival's triumphant close, the swains of K. B. T., fanned into great jubilation by dreams of lechery and drunkenness and a night free from the restraints of the good homes to which they were accustomed, assembled at Devil's Dam for their annual Spring Spree. The Spree had been scheduled for the week of the revival, but some of the more sober-minded members of the order had counseled discretion and were actually a little superstitious, so that the affair was graciously postponed for a week. A week's further restraint had merely had the effect of starving the bulls and lions a bit longer, so that, as the wilder brothers said hilariously and the timid ones a trifle fearfully, there was really no telling what would happen.

Twelve new pledges, among them the towering Sphinx and the squirming Tommy Orr, had been initiated with much zest and horseplay on the Monday night before while the doctor was telling Simeon Hawk that things had at last been straightened up on the campus. The order was proud to the overflowing of its new

initiates, and plans were afoot to make the celebration appropriate to the acquisition of such celebrities.

All the brothers were solemnly instructed by the Chief Hokum to get exceedingly hot dates for the occasion. As a further part of the initiation, however, some jovial yokel from Kaufman, Texas, suggested that the initiates be allowed to make no formal dates but be required to tour the streets of the city in old Fords the night of the Spree and pick up chippies for their companions. The suggestion met with roars of approval, even among the initiates. A few of the older brothers dated nice girls from the dormitories and co-eds from the city, but wind of the nature of the affair somehow whistled around the campus, and when these older brothers called for their dates, they found that most of them had gone to visit aunts and had left word that everything was off. So it was that almost all of the forty brothers were forced in the last extremity to comb the streets for their lady friends; several cars of initiates were roughly stopped, and the girls already procured were transferred to the cars of the older members and the initiates instructed to look out for others.

This made the crowd a little late in assembling, and Sol paced the floor rather impatiently, adjusting tablecloths and blowing lint from the bar, and wondering if a pack of dirty undergraduates had stood him up.

The bellow of a great Klaxon in the driveway shortly after nine-thirty announced the arrival of the vanguard. Some of the more thoughtful members of the order had supplied liquor to the cars, and everyone was a little drunk, the better to enjoy drinking later.

"Whoop la! Set 'em afire!" a burly junior shouted as he threw his girl over the banister of the front porch and vaulted up behind her.

"Ride 'em, cowboy!" answered another, and a third let out one of those blood-curdling siren yells which would scare a full-grown steer to death. It was Ox Rountree from Santa Fe, and rumor had it about the campus that he had once stopped a stampede with that yell.

Everyone thought it marvelously funny, and several of the girls tried to do it too. Two boys and two girls fell into an argument, one of the boys asserting that this was the wrong

house and another saying that his mamma wouldn't let him go in anyway.

"I got religion," he said with a thickness which he exaggerated without trying. The four were standing on the bottom step. "I ain' goin' in this place. D'you know what thish place ish? It's a house of hillfeem."

His companions tried to console him, and the girls patted his head, but he was steadfast.

"All right," said his companion, "we'll call the manager."

Sol Barsoom was already on the porch, anxious to welcome his guests with open arms, yet a little afraid to. It would be best to be a trifle restrained, he felt.

"C'm'ere, Solomon," one of the boys called. "This guy thinks this is a house of ill fame. It ain't, is it?"

"Oh, my dear, no" Sol said, and slapped his thigh in great hilarity.

"Hish name's Sholomon," said the obstreperous one suspiciously. He staggered a moment and pointed imperfectly to make what he was about to say all the funnier: "I bet hesh got a thousand wifes."

This was really too good, and the four surged forward, brushing past Sol and sweeping on into the dining room and ballroom which the Jew had made by knocking out the hall partition of the old farmhouse. Solomon followed the crowd sheepishly and shaking his round little head in alarm. He seated them as far from the door as possible and ordered the waiters to bring ginger ale. Things seemed in a good way to quiet down, but a few moments later Sol heard a commotion in the corner and rushed over to find one of his waiters holding his jaw on the floor. Ox was standing above him.

"Goddam that dirty rat," Ox was saying as he brushed his sleeve off in a gesture of righteous wrath. "I'll teach 'im to put 'is hand on my woman." Then he gave his cowboy yell and sat down with a thud.

Sol consoled himself with the thought that things certainly could not get much worse. But he simply didn't know his undergraduates, he found, as the evening wore on. True, the next crowd and the next, some twenty couples in all, were not so bad.

They came in in a rather orderly fashion and took their places at tables. But the fourth crowd stirred things anew.

It was composed of five men and four women and the leader was a giant bigger than Ox Rountree. He swaggered as he entered the room and looked around him like a Western bad man. A roar of greeting surged from all the crowd.

"Hi, freshman."

"Rine 'im."

"Tail up, lad."

"Atta boy, Sphinx."

Sphinx stood for a moment, grinning. Then he said: "I kin whip any three men here."

There was a roar of laughter at this, and Sol rushed forward. "Goot-evening," he said, though he tried especially hard to say, "Good-evening." "Walk right over here."

He placed the newcomers on a far corner from the first arrivals, but the two camps were soon throwing olives and rolls at each other. There was nothing to do but to start the music. Sol signaled to the orchestra and shuddered as he watched the couples take their places on the floor. The arrival of Sphinx and the presence of Ox worried him. Something in his canny little mind told him that those two bucks would lock antlers for a doe before the evening was over and that savages would stand about and watch the conflict until a brawl ensued. While it was difficult for even the experienced Sol to determine, the young woman with Sphinx looked as though she were a daughter of respectability. She was dressed like the others, to be sure, but she seemed a trifle less painted and a trifle more haughty than the others. She smiled often; indeed, she smiled too often. She could keep no look of happiness on her face and had to be forever putting it back. Sol clucked through his teeth and hoped that she would ask to be taken home; but though she looked frightened at times, she had the set appearance of a woman who was out slumming and had every intention of seeing whatever there was to see.

The first dance went off well enough. There were several collisions, and one or two of the girls said nasty things to each other, but hilarity seemed the prevailing mood. It was after the last encore and the couples had resumed their seats that Ox got

up and strolled over to the table where Sphinx and the violet were seated. Sol followed and posted himself where he could overhear.

"Good-evening," said Ox with a bow which he could not have accomplished had he not been a little drunk.

"Yes, sir," Sphinx replied, looking up casually.

"Introduce me to your woman friend," Ox commanded.

"Oh, Ox, you know me," the girl laughed.

"No, I don't," Ox replied sulkily. "An' what's more, don't call me Ox. I just let ladies do that."

The girl colored until her blonde head looked like a wax advertisement of a permanent wave.

"That'll do, Rountree," Sphinx said ominously.

"What do ya mean that hill do?" Ox inquired playfully.

"Go on back and let Miss Fitch alone."

"Who in hell're you to tell me to go on back and let Miss Fish alone?"

"Lissen."

"I hear ya."

"Arrright."

"Well, say it."

"You needn't get sore cause she stood you up. I had this date first."

"Ah, ya did, didja?" Ox turned and started away, calling back over his shoulder, "Well, we'll see who hassit last."

The evening wore on, and the dancing grew worse and worse until it reached a level which everyone gladly recognized as debauchery. The couples assumed every posture, and several of the couples held most of the postures long after the music had stopped, keeping all the time the rhythm and movement of the dance.

Then it was that a very frizzy girl in a very short skirt complained loudly of being too hot. And before her muddled brain knew what had happened, her playful sophomore companion had reached his hand up under her dress and yanked off her step-ins with great aplomb. The moment he did it he realized that it was excruciatingly funny and he climbed on a near-by table, swaying precariously and holding the flimsies aloft like a handkerchief in chautauqua salute.

"Hey, gang!" he shouted above the bedlam. "Lissen. All of you all lissen. Lissen, I tell you."

Everyone but Ox gave attention. Ox was making himself disagreeable by trying to convince Sol that he was his friend.

"Here's what, gang!" the soph went on. "We're gonna have a panty-pullin' party. Get me? A *panty-pullin' party!*"

He shouted the last words at the top of his voice and fell off the table. There was a mad scramble. Most of the girls rushed giggling out of the doors while the bucks roared gleefully after them. The small group left in the ballroom lay back and roared at the fun. Sol shook his head at the spectacle; he noted with some comfort that Sphinx and his blonde were still there. They were not laughing, but the girl had been drinking, and she looked less and less distinct from her disreputable sisters. Why in hell didn't the big beef trust go on and take her home before something happened?

A few minutes later the couples drifted back in, taking their places and laughing hysterically or else weak from laughter and amusement. There were loud calls for more liquor and shouts of "On with the dance." The couples stumbled onto the floor when the music began, the young men with shreds of lingerie fastened about their necks like bandanas, and the girls tugging uncertainly at their clothes.

The dance that followed was not even an excuse. Young boys from respectable homes and small towns were tasting the pleasures of sin de luxe for a season, and they knew not what to make of it. The decency which would have been present among a crowd of more seasoned sinners was entirely gone, and the couples gave way to embraces and practices every whit as bad as an evangelist imagines without ever having seen a ribald dance. There were squeals and giggles and loud laughter and even to worldly minded Sol this crowd of panting, seething, gibbering undergraduates moving in terrible and wanton lust before him seemed a pack of childish heathens in an orgy which only divine frenzy could create. He moved near the orchestra and bade them stop. The music ceased, but the dance went on. In desperation he leaped to a table and shouted:

"Wait! Wait! I hef one big surprize—one beeeeeeg surprize." The crowd regarded him stupidly, but he took his round little

belly full of wind and went on: "I helf arranged that we should have one fine solo dance. A solo dance!"

The idea was approved, largely because the merrymakers were completely exhausted; they struggled back to their seats and flopped down with resignation.

Sol clapped his pudgy hands and fingered his huge watch charm desperately. "I gif a prize, a prize," he repeated with appropriate emphasis, "of feefty dollars"—and he made it sound like a million—"for the younk lady who will solo dance best. Who will be first try, huh?"

There was a moment's hesitation, then a tall, black-haired wench, whose earrings made her look like a dangerous señorita, stepped out onto the floor and began to prance gracefully about. She cavorted this way and that, tweaked the nose of one of the boys at a table, and ran across the floor like a frightened butterfly. Some of the boys cheered, but someone shouted:

"Get hot." Whereupon she lifted her skirt a few inches higher and redoubled her labors, patting her thighs with her hands and shaking her head in savage ecstasy. The sated crowd looked on with some amusement, and the boys, tired of almost everything, were relieved and stimulated by the milder spectacle of a woman exposing herself systematically. She snapped her fingers and balled the jack, and all the time the beat of the music was supplemented by the relentless clapping of hands. Faster and faster went the music and faster and faster the señorita whirled and careened, until at last she pirouetted and spanked herself into complete exhaustion and sank into a chair.

Others followed. There was one fat lassie who got quite a hand from her accomplished rendition of the hula-hula, and there was an amazon who turned handsprings and stood on her head until two girls dragged her off the floor. Everything would probably have gone off as peacefully as Sol had hoped if the crowd hadn't gotten bored and if Ox hadn't spotted Sphinx's girl. She was a co-ed, and Ox passed the conviction around that she ought to show these town women how to dance. Thus, at the behest of Ox, there began to be repeated shouts of, "Babe! Babe! We want Babe. Come on, Babe. Show 'em how it's done!"

For a while neither Sphinx nor Babe paid any attention, but the cries grew so insistent, and Babe, who by now had drunk

more corn than her maidenly stomach could safely care for, grew so giddy that at last she got up from the table.

Sphinx laid a restraining hand on her arm. "Where are you going, kid?"

"Leggo. I'm gonna show these street walkers how it's done."

There was a shout of approval from the brothers. But Sphinx clutched her hand.

"No, you're not," he said grimly.

"Say, who are you, big boy? Let me loose."

Sphinx shook his head stubbornly. He bit his lip and looked around bewildered. "Nope." He got up from the table and started toward the check room, his grip still on the Babe's arm. "We're going home, kid, and we oughtta done it a long time ago."

The Babe squirmed impotently. The crowd yelled its disapproval, and Ox met the couple half across the floor.

"Whazza matter?" he inquired, and the crowd quieted.

"We're goin'," Sphinx said.

"Goin'? Hell, the fun's jus' begin."

Sphinx started past him, but Ox laid a hand on Sphinx's lapel. "I say, if the woman wan's to dance, letter."

"That's right! You tell 'em, Ox!"

"We're goin' home," Sphinx said again.

"All right, cry-baby!" Ox jeered. Then he turned to face the crowd. "Sphinx's got relishun, gang, and he cain't let 'is girl friend have any fun."

He laughed boisterously at this, and the crowd cheered. But Sphinx had put the Babe gently to one side, and with a face so hard that it made the real Sphinx seem like putty he said:

"I said I was gonna whip the first sonofabitch that said anything like that." He swung with all the force of his body at Ox's chin. There must have been something of an uppercut in that swing, for Ox did not fall; instead he seemed to float backwards entirely across the floor until he crashed into a table filled with glasses. Quickly he recovered himself and dashed back to gore his tormentor. But Sphinx wound up this time, and when Ox reached a proper distance he let go like a piston. There was a crack as audible as the breaking of a chicken bone at a quiet dinner. Ox tried once more. He struggled to his feet, staggered uncertainly for a moment, then, as though with the last energy

of his life, he seized a bottle from the floor and hurled it. It smashed into pieces against the wall over Sphinx's head and Ox slumped into a chair.

By now Sol, who had consoled himself all evening with the thought that things couldn't get much worse, concluded that almost anything could happen. Three men were on Sphinx, pounding helplessly and writhing against his strength. It was a free-for-all, and no one knew where it would end. Badgered and desperate, Sol reached for the switch and turned out the lights. The last thing he remembered was the sight of Sphinx shaking himself free and banging the heads of two of his chief assailants together while he kicked the third with the force and gusto of a mule. . . .

HORSE! Horse! Wake up!"

The voice was Virginia's, and it was unmistakably alarmed. Was there a fire? The thought brought the doctor suddenly to consciousness, and he sat up quickly in bed, looking about for some belying glare upon the floor and sniffing with twitching, rabbit-like movements of his nostrils for the odor of burning wood.

"What is it, hon?" he asked softly. If not fire, perhaps robbers. Or had Marion been hurt?

"Colonel Willingham wants you on the 'phone. I had to go down to answer it. I thought you'd never wake up."

"What in heaven's name could he want at this unearthly hour?" he mumbled, slipping his bathrobe over his modest nightgown and staggering uncertainly toward the doorway.

"Something's gone wrong at the university," Virginia called after him. "He wouldn't tell me what it was, but he said it was urgent. Be careful on the stairs, Horse."

Once at the 'phone he picked up the receiver and tried to say, "Hello! Hello!" in a way that would not belie the fact that he was still groggy and inarticulate with sleep. His voice sounded remote, a phonograph within him.

"What say, Colonel?" His mind had fully wakened by now, but his body and its faculties still snored in his ears. "Oh, terrible, Colonel! . . . You don't say. . . . Yes, I'll be right up."

"What is it?" Virginia commanded from the head of the stairs.

"Nothing, hon, nothing. There's been trouble that I'll have to straighten up. You go on back to bed."

"I'll do nothing of the sort. What did you mean by telling him you would be right up?"

"I tell you I have to do something immediately, my dear," he soothed, grappling the banister with unsteady hand and trying hard to execute two steps at a time.

"Well, I'm going with you," she announced resolutely. She towered over him now, holding the stair against his advance, standing between him and his clothes.

"My dear." His words were a feeble supplication. "Willingham 'phoned to say that some of the college boys had been arrested for drunkenness, and the federal district attorney's office is holding them for investigation."

"Now that's a pretty thing to get into a stew about, isn't it? If they got drunk, let them lay it out in jail. What can you do?"

"I'm not sure yet just what I can do," he replied, murder welling in his heart. "That's what I'm going to the university for—to find out. I know this much: I must protect the university's good name at all cost. It would be a great thing, now, wouldn't it, if all this got into the papers?"

She had withdrawn slightly, but enough to let him pass. "Can't you call the papers from here?"

He entered his room and closed the door resonantly behind him. "No, I'm afraid not." Hurriedly he pulled on his clothes, shivering nervously in the cold night air, fumbling abstractedly for buttons, trembling at the prospect before him. Perhaps in a single evening the granite achievement of his revival had been blasted—detonation shaking the countryside and scattering the fragments of his good into every quarter of the constituency. How often he had said that a person can destroy in a moment what has required years upon years to build. Now he came suddenly face to face with the reality of what he had so often spoken from the pulpit. His sermons had come home to him. Yet he was not responsible. He had been innocent. Others had thrown the bomb into the mountain he had built. And he must suffer. He must take the blame and rise like a man from the wreckage to build again that which careless men had destroyed. . . .

Willingham was awaiting him on the great stone steps of Martha Sumner Hall, pacing back and forth like a chained coyote. In the penumbra which the street lights cast, every nook of the building seemed alive with phantoms or, worse, lurking figures of men. Only one light shone within, and that was in the business manager's office. There the two men went without a word, the colonel wheezing as he climbed the steps and shaking his head in impotent wonder and distress, the doctor walking erectly at his side, his eyes sternly to the fore, feeling both leonine and sheepish. There was something ticklish about their presence here this time of night—here where they felt so thoroughly at

home in daylight hours. It seemed conspiracy—this honorable mission they were on, and all because the night environed it. . . . Two full-grown men prowling through the corridors of a university in the dead of night!

Once in his office, Willingham drew down the shade before he spoke; more than ever the doctor felt a sense of guilt blacken the vision of noble deeds before him. "They got about fifty of our students, Doctor. I got wind of the affair and thought I'd better call you. It was the federal officers," he added significantly.

That was bad. County officials were amenable. Court procedure there was less relentless and efficient. The doctor's heart quaked as he thought of monkeying with Uncle Sam; a good citizen, he held the federal courts and all things pertaining thereto in awe. Worst of all, if the federal officers were involved, that meant, at this particular season of American history, only one thing: the students had been drinking and they had been violating the Eighteenth Amendment. Not content with swearing and concupiscence, they had flown in the face of established law and order, bringing down upon themselves and the good name of the university the chiefest of obloquies: they had broken the law of the land and condoned those who had broken it before them.

The doctor stood—a statue chiseled from hard, cold, unyielding flesh. He must be strong, regardless of which way it seemed necessary for him and his administration to turn. Yet strength seemed a virtue that would hardly fit his needs. Having strength, he must use it, but he felt that he needed subtler faculties. He was colossal when he wanted to be dexterous. Suddenly he grew uncomfortable, self-conscious in the glare of the pitiless light, and suddenly he became aware that he had dressed in haste. Quietly his hand stole from his side to inspect his tie and buttons. "Where did all this occur?" he asked.

"At some disreputable den out on the Saunderson Pike—at a place called Devil's Dam, I think."

What good did it do to know? It had occurred. That was sufficient to spoil the first fruits of his recent labors. If the papers got hold of this! Or if Easton and his crowd learned what had taken place . . . !

Willingham annoyed him. The puffy business manager stewed around, looking here and there, as if he might find the solution for their difficulties in some tangible object within the room. He stopped occasionally to mop his face and look at the doctor with the unenlightened eyes of an ailing calf. The doctor at last took himself in hand. He appeared increasingly thoughtful, weighing several possible courses of action, but when Willingham turned to him to speak again, he seemed willing enough to drop any ideas he might have had.

"I've caught the *Morning Telegram*," the business manager said. "They won't carry anything about it. But of course the *Press* will play it up over everything else they have Monday afternoon. What we better do is to get Hawk to meet us down at the Federal Building and see if we can't put a stop to this thing before it goes any further."

This suggestion the chancellor weighed with beetled brow. If there was nothing wrong with it, why had Willingham been reluctant to set it forth? Would there be anything dishonorable in seeing the district attorney? Not if the good name of the university was at stake.

With a fine gesture of command he said: "Get Hawk on the wire right away and tell him I said meet us at the federal district attorney's office."

II

It was a lonesome ride the doctor and his lieutenant took that night. Forlorn cops stood under street lights and turned to gaze suspiciously after them as they passed. Night revelers honked and whistled and made merry as they passed them now and then; one drunken driver came near sideswiping them, and after he passed them, shouted, "Get off the street. Who the hell you think you are?" Long stretches passed with no sign of life, with no sound save the whirl of their own motor, droning monotonously or amplified into startling likeness to another motor as they passed a building set close upon the street. The city seemed forsaken save by those who guarded the law and those bent on breaking it.

Mr. Hawk was waiting for them impatiently in the great

arc light before the Federal Building. "Well," he grunted, looking at the two disdainfully, "this is a pretty mess we're in."

"Shameful," agreed the chancellor.

"I'd better have brought Buck, don't you think?" Hawk inquired menacingly. Everything he did carried some implied threat.

"No." It was Colonel Willingham who spoke. "This isn't a case for lawyers just yet."

"It will be soon enough," Mr. Hawk countered, blowing his nose vigorously and shaking it with his handkerchief. "Well, what do we propose to do?"

"We'll have to see the federal district attorney," the chancellor said lamely. "That's all I know to do."

"Where'll that get you?"

There was something in Mr. Hawk's swaggering tone that made the doctor suddenly resolute. "Never mind. We'll see. Come along."

He entered the building, inquired of a guard where the district attorney's office was to be found, and together the three began the climb to the third floor. The elevators were not running at that time of night, and the chancellor was panting like a tired setter when they reached their floor. Of a plain-clothes man who loitered about the door of a smoke-filled room he inquired between gasps:

"Is—the district—attorney in?"

"One of 'em," the bull replied, sizing up his men as he spoke.

"I'd like to see the gentleman in charge," the chancellor said as firmly as his overworked diaphragm would permit. He realized that a few more minutes in this man's presence would make him feel like a criminal.

"Busy," the agent answered curtly, pointing over his shoulder to a red-headed young man who sat with feet propped up on his desk. Then, apparently deciding that his visitors were okay, he went on: "We pulled a big raid to-night, and the boss's sore as hell, having to be on the job this time o' night. Raided a joint out on Saunderson Pike. Bunch of college rah-rah boys and chippies, mostly. Fine set of chumps. It'll go hard with some of them guys if we ever catch 'em, and the chief says he'll do it or die."

So it was possible that some of the fellows had escaped. "How many did you finally get?" the chancellor asked.

"No more'n about twenty, so far, I reckon, But——"

Third Assistant District Attorney Fletcher shouted from within. "Mack, who are those birds?"

"What's your business?" the bull asked gruffly, remembering his dignity and hiding his chatty air in the face of duty.

What their business was they did not care to state any more often than necessary. "We're here to see the district attorney," the doctor said hoarsely.

"My name is Simeon Hawk," the chairman of the Board of Regents began.

"Yeah?"

"Let 'em in, Mack," the red-headed young man called. "Don't try to be such a damned butler."

All of the men in the office were smoking, and all of them were staring at the visitors with that same curious, appraising look among swains in church services in the back places. These men were unashamed to stare; they were paid to stare and to watch their fellow man in a way that gave him the creeps. They watched even when they seemed not to be watching. One man was seated with his back to the door, yet the doctor felt keenly that this man sat that way in order to see him better. Were there not others posted in adjoining rooms?

"Well?" The young man with the red hair remained seated. The chancellor stepped forward and lifted himself to his full height.

"My name is Dickey," he announced.

"Yes, sir." The young district attorney said that as though the name of Dickey meant no more to him than the Athanasian creed. "Mine's Fletcher."

"This is Colonel Willingham," the chancellor went on. The district attorney nodded. "And this," the chancellor continued with a flourish of his hand, "is Mr. Hawk, of whom you know, I am sure."

"Can't say as I do."

Apparently that was all the young man intended to say, and the chancellor hurried on in his most genial manner, "We wondered if we might have a talk with you."

"Fire away. What've you got on?"

"Well, I wouldn't say we had anything on," the doctor said, coughing a rather wan laugh. "That is, nothing up our sleeves." He smiled at the detectives. They showed no signs of leaving.

"Give us some chairs, Tom," the district attorney ordered.

Tom got up grudgingly and shoved his own chair, together with two others, in the direction of the men.

"Be seated," the chief ordered. "Now what is it?"

"Well," the doctor began, drawing his chair up and leaning his elbows on the desk in a most friendly manner, "we've come to see you about what can be done about a few boys you've got here."

"Oh, I see." The district attorney's face lightened up satanically. "Now it's all clearing up. I see. You're from the university, I take it."

"That's it," Mr. Hawk interrupted enthusiastically. "We're the officials of the university. I have the honor to be chairman of the Board of Regents; Dr. Dickey here happens to be chancellor, and Colonel Willingham, on the chancellor's right, is director of public relations, you might say."

"Well, gentlemen, I'm honored more highly than I had dreamed. Now," he went on sharply, "what's so important about this affair that you men come running down here with your shirt-tails out at this hour of the night?"

"We're here to protect the good name of the university," said Mr. Hawk with staccato emphasis.

"My attention has been called," the chancellor said pompously, "to the fact that some of our students are alleged to have been present at a party out at—ah—Devil's Dam, I believe, earlier in the evening. I want you to know, sir, that if this is true, I am deeply grieved."

"Yes, I suppose you are," Fletcher said indifferently. "Where'd you get your information?"

"Why, that's rather difficult to say," the doctor remarked, turning with some embarrassment toward Colonel Willingham at this unexpected question. Strangely enough, he had not expected the district attorney to ask him any questions. What if this were only the beginning of a series?

"Rather difficult to say? None of the boys came running home to tell Papa to get 'em out of trouble, eh?"

"Oh, certainly not." The chancellor was able to laugh at the absurdity of this conjecture, and laughter restored his fleeting confidence. "My dear fellow, you mistake me grossly if you think I am here for that purpose. We wish merely to coöperate with you."

"Well, you've certainly started off well," the young man with the red hair mused. "Fact is, I hadn't any idea that these roughnecks were your charges. I thought they were probably A. & M. fellows or possibly from State."

"Maybe they are," said Mr. Hawk quickly.

"Oh, no, they're not," Fletcher retorted. "I know now well enough who they are. Well, if you men wish to coöperate, I might get you to identify some of the boys in the hoosegow, then."

"Oh, I couldn't do that," said the chancellor, very much abashed. "You see I have been at the university only a short time, and I do not know the names and faces of the students just yet."

"And are you newcomers, too?" Fletcher turned to the business manager and to Simeon Hawk.

"No, young man, I'm not a newcomer," Mr. Hawk said fiercely. "Far from it. I ran this town before you kicked the slats out of the cradle. I've handled worse men than you." He banged on the desk with his fist and prattled on: "Now, we're not here to identify the students, and you might as well get that straight. I think you're just a little too smart-aleck, if you want to know my opinion."

"I haven't asked it."

"Well, you have it, anyway. You're just a little pup on a night cop's job, and you think you can run the whole damn city. Now you lissen: We're here to say that we can handle our part of the thing in the regular way. If these kids have violated the law, they have violated the rules of the institution. We'll tend to 'em, good and proper, but we don't want you draggin' 'em into court like you would a bunch of cutthroats."

"That's precisely it, Mr. Fletcher," the doctor supplemented hurriedly. "Admirably stated. Our purpose is most worthy."

"Oh, of course it is," the red-headed young man retorted. "I

appreciate your position thoroughly. You're anxious to save the good name of your institution."

"Yes, indeed!"

"No matter to what lengths you have to go."

"Well——"

"Oh, that's all right, gentlemen. I can understand. But you see my position is somewhat embarrassed by the fact that I am supposed to enforce the law. These fellows have been caught red-handed."

"Tush! Tush!" cried Mr. Hawk. "Have you never been to college?"

"Come, now," Mr. Fletcher replied, feigning a girlish air and holding up his hand in faint protest, "don't ask me that. Next you'll be asking me if I never had a mother."

Mr. Hawk looked as though he would have liked to throw an ink well at the federal district attorney, but he went on somewhat mildly: "We see your position, but we want you to see ours. We must get these boys out of this scrape."

"Well, I'll see what can be done. But before we go any further, I'd like to say a word or two, by God. All of this stew is so ridiculous. You respectable, middle-class bums enact a law, like prohibition—and I judge by your coat-tails, sir," he said, turning to the chancellor, "that you had something to do with it.—You enact a law and holler like hell if it isn't enforced. But let one of us poor working men try to enforce it and see what happens. We get a crowd of your bad little boys, catch 'em red-handed and drag 'em in. Then here you come all pantin' and hot and bothered and threaten me with arrest if I don't let 'em out. It's all too god-awful silly for words."

"We haven't threatened you with arrest," the chancellor corrected. "We simply want these boys under our control. Now," he went on, "we would be the last to interfere with the normal processes of the law. If you really want to do a public service——"

"I'm dying to."

"—then I suggest you prosecute your case against the man who was responsible for this party, the man at whose disreputable establishment this disgraceful affair took place."

"That's a good idea," said Mr. Hawk. "He ought to have the law on him."

"Thanks for the tip," said the district attorney. "I may do that. I suppose that was all you wanted with me, wasn't it?"

"Why, yes, I believe it was," the chancellor said, rising hurriedly. "I hope we haven't disturbed you. We certainly appreciate your splendid coöperation in this matter."

"Oh, well," the young man sighed, "it's really nothing at all. I ought to have known that you can't enforce the law among your class. It simply isn't done. I really owe you an apology."

Mr. Hawk lingered a moment as though he would like very much to say or do something, but on further thought he turned on his heel and followed the chancellor and business manager out into the hall.

THIRTEEN

NEXT morning the chancellor arose earlier than usual; indeed, he had not been able to sleep since his visit to the dens of government, and now he fell to looking at himself quite sternly in the mirror and saying a great many forceful things as he shaved. He said some things with a full beard of lather, gesturing with his razor and looking earnestly through half-closed eyes; he said other things when only a goatee of lather remained, and still other things when nothing remained but a thin, impressionistic mustache; and he talked on when he had washed and powdered himself and nothing was left to conceal the deep lines which character had eaten into his face.

"The attitude of my administration is simply this . . ." he announced solemnly to the fixtures; or, "The university cannot for one moment tolerate the thought . . ." or, "It is with the utmost regret that I have had brought to my attention . . ." None of these high proclamations he ever quite brought to a finish, but they cheered him and made him feel lordly. As long as he remained in the lavatory the problem was simple. There was something sacred and cloistered about a bathroom; there a man could be baron of the whole domain of thought; he could be in the world but not of it.

Once seated across the table from Virginia, however, his courage fled, frantic at the first glimpse of reality. The table was accusingly prophylactic, and the glare of the sun in the breakfast room illumined every crevice of his soul and revealed every defect of his dress.

"You have powder on your neck," Virginia greeted him.

He wiped it off with his napkin and left a train of lint on his collar.

"Well, what happened?"

The doctor could not think for the life of him why he did not wish to tell her or why he was furious with her for asking. Perhaps it was the sense of guilt he felt in the accusing brightness of the morning, or perhaps it was that maddening way she looked at him. Relentless memory flashed before him the picture

of the first time he had forced his affections on the pure Virginia Cathwaite after their marriage and had found her the next morning a nervous and storm-tossed child, with the hatred of a child burning in her eyes.

"Why, dear," he said at last, "things are in pretty bad shape, but I think we can straighten them out. We managed to get all the boys released and hushed the matter up."

He paused in midair, and Virginia darted at him.

"How did you hush the matter up?"

Sarabelle, interrupting to say that a Mr. Boom was on the wire, saved him the necessity of reply.

"A Mr. Boom?" the doctor asked in amazement.

"That's whut he said," protested the negress.

With some difficulty the doctor made it out that a Mr. Barsoom, Solomon Barsoom, in fact, was speaking to him. That gentleman wished to come at once to see him.

"But, my dear fellow, I have to preach at eleven o'clock," the doctor sparred. "What do you want?"

Mr. Barsoom preferred not to state over the 'phone, but he did say that it was with reference to "last night's occurrence."

"I can't see you now. You mustn't even think I can. Why don't you call Colonel Willingham and arrange to see him? That would be much better."

To this the other person reluctantly agreed. When he returned to the breakfast room Marion was there, and her presence spared him further comment on the nasty affair of the night before. Once it occurred to him with distinctly physical terror that she might have been at Devil's Dam, and the thought set his body to tingling and accelerated the beat of his heart mercilessly before he could dismiss it as absurd. Then he spoke of something irrelevant and commonplace to drive the ghastly idea away.

II

The chancellor preached that morning at the Ashland Boulevard Baptist Church, but his words were only a barrage of fireworks behind which his real thoughts hid. Who was this fellow Barloom, or whatever his name was, and what urgent busi-

ness could he have on Sunday morning with the chancellor of a university?

Colonel Willingham had left word for the doctor to call him as soon as he returned from church. The two were to meet as quickly after dinner as possible at the home of Stephen Buck. That was both ominous and encouraging. Apparently certain legal difficulties had sprung up which demanded expert help, but if that was true Judge Stephen Buck was the best man in the world to consult. The chancellor had known him for many years. They had met in the early days when Buck was a rising state attorney and the doctor a young minister with a sense of moral righteousness not uncommon among young ministers. The two became fast friends, and though Buck gradually withdrew from the moral fight the memory of his early vigor lingered in the doctor's mind. Then, too, Buck had once defended the doctor valiantly in a libel suit, and ever since that time the doctor had looked upon him as not only a master attorney but also a man of the highest principles. It was with a feeling of security that the chancellor found upon coming to the university a man of such parts in the deanship of the School of Law.

Shortly after two that afternoon the chancellor and the colonel knocked at the door of the judge's home. A sharp, inquiring bark answered them from within, and a moment later the judge, escorted by a large, serious, shaggy dog, came to greet them.

"Don't stand on ceremony, gentlemen," he said graciously. "Come on in." He shook hands with both of them in a slightly pre-occupied manner and led them into the library. "Give me your coats and I'll get rid of them." He placed the coats over his arm and started to an adjoining room; then, as if on second thought, he paused: "I may as well introduce you now to Shep. He'll demand to know you sooner or later. Shep, these are two friends of mine." Shep sniffed the leg of the chancellor experimentally. "Can't you shake hands with them?" He lifted his paw lackadaisically and, the greeting over, took up his position in front of the fire. The two men moved around to chairs; there was a book astride the arm of one of the chairs, and the doctor examined it curiously. It was called *Almayer's Folly*. He had not heard of it. By now the judge was back and in a more cordial mood, as

though he had been pulled from a pleasant reverie and was only now beginning to recover his faculties.

He was a man of striking carriage, tall and the least bit gaunt. His hair and goatee were white, there was something about him that reminded one of the old Southern Colonel. There was something, too, about his stately bearing in the midst of rather unstately surroundings which marked him as poor but proud, a man unable to succeed in the modern world, a little wistful and a little arrogant about his maladjustment. Above all, though, there was to the doctor something very reassuring about the man. He was able in the judge's library to relax completely for the first time in hours.

"Well, Doctor," the judge began when he had passed long cheroots to his guests and lighted one with ceremony, "I haven't seen as much of you as I had expected to."

"No, we've both been awfully busy, I reckon," the chancellor replied, beginning suddenly to rock in his chair as though embarrassed.

"I believe you two gentlemen knew each other before, didn't you say, Dr. Dickey?" the business manager observed cautiously.

"Oh, yes," said the chancellor. "You remember I told you Judge Buck had been one of my dearest friends. I was just saying to Virginia the other evening, Judge, that we must see you before long. It's really amazing how busy we have been and how little we have gotten done." He licked his cigar awkwardly where it had broken as he removed the band and went on: "You've got a cozy place here, Judge."

The judge smiled wanly. "Cozy, yes. I think you have the word. It isn't a bit pretentious, though it's certainly all I need." He glanced about with an air of effortful satisfaction.

"Your daughter isn't with you now?" the doctor inquired.

"No, she's still with my sister in Missouri. She's in school there, and I suppose that, all in all, it's best for her to be where she is."

"I didn't know you had a daughter, Judge," Colonel Willingham said with tactless surprise.

"Oh, yes. I have a daughter—let's see—she'll be twenty this next month, I think. She's lived with my sister most of her life."

"Now, that's one on me," Willingham persisted. "Well, well, well."

"Oh, yes," the judge said again, a little wearily. The conversation skidded, and the doctor hastened on to more pleasant topics. They discussed the days of youth, the happiness of the judge in his pleasant location, the hardships of legal life, the weather, and the judge told about the blizzard of 1915 and what it had done to the cattle on the J-A Ranch. He had gone West shortly after their first meeting and had acquired a marvelous collection of frontier stories. Indeed, the collection would have kept the chancellor entertained long into the afternoon had Colonel Willingham not suggested the business of the occasion. Reluctantly the men turned to the unpleasant discussion before them; it was clear that they had postponed mention of it until it could no longer be avoided.

"Has Willingham told you what happened this morning?" the judge asked. His attitude had suddenly become that of an expert, and there was a thread of steel in his voice that had not been there before.

The chancellor shook his head. "We've had no occasion to discuss matters to-day," he said.

"Well, in the first place, Barsoom, the proprietor of the Devil's Dam, is raising a great fuss."

"Oh!" The name of the funny man who had called him during the morning flashed through his mind. "Is that who he is?"

"That's the man."

"He got me out of bed this morning," the colonel complained. "I don't know how he got it into his head to call me, but he was mad as a hornet and said we'd have to protect him."

"Protect him?" The chancellor was mortified.

"Yes," said the judge quietly. "It's a case of legitimate blackmail, shall we say. Barsoom is already in Dutch with the federal authorities, and they're going to make it hot for him this time. The church people are demanding that Prohibition be enforced, and the federal office has a clear case.

"Now," he continued, half to himself, "the upshot of it all is this: if we don't get Barsoom out of this mess, he'll squeal about the university boys, and then the game will be up as far as scandal is concerned."

Buck leaned back luxuriously in his chair, puffed contentedly on his cigar, and brushed the smoke away from his face with a graceful, sweeping gesture. A smile began to gather in the wrinkles of his eyes; then it spread over his face, and he laid his head back and began to laugh.

"It's funny, our having to get Barsoom out of this business, isn't it?" Then he laughed again as though it really was funny, and the doctor, embarrassed and chagrined at first, thought the situation rather amusing and laughed a little himself. There was, after all, something healthy in seeing the thing as it was; it seemed amusing as long as he laughed, but the moment he stopped the humor fled.

"But, Judge," he protested, "this thing is very serious. It would be ridiculous for us to support Barsoom."

"Ridiculous but safe, Doctor. I really don't see any way out of it, personally. You had best leave that problem to me. I merely wanted to let you know what I was doing and be sure that you made no false move. I can hardly afford to defend Barsoom myself, but I will place my talent at his disposal and see that he is well defended."

"I'll have to leave that to you, Judge. It's much too complicated for me." The chancellor stared past the fireplace and shook his head sadly. "Terrible."

"If we had nothing but Barsoom to worry about the situation would not be serious," Judge Buck continued. "But the half has not yet been told." He seemed very reluctant to go on, and Colonel Willingham got up and dusted the ashes from his lap and stood before the fire. "The fact is, Doctor, there was a case of assault out there last night."

"A case of what?" The chancellor's eyes bulged as much as if Banquo's ghost had stalked across the hearth.

"Assault." The word bounded through the room and seemed to echo from distant corners.

"The state's attorney says that the daughter of a prominent family was attacked."

"It's all a frame-up," the colonel said lamely, rubbing his buttocks desperately with his pudgy hands. "I don't believe it."

"It's hardly necessary to remind you that whether you or I

believe it makes no difference," the judge warned him. "The charge, Doctor, is against young Harmon."

The chancellor gasped. "Why, that's impossible. He was converted only last week."

"Then he may have had a sudden relapse, for it's pretty conclusive that he was at Devil's Dam, and I'm not sure but there's a plausible case against him, though of course I haven't gone into it at all."

The doctor's head dropped to his chest as though he had suddenly fallen asleep. Feeling fled. The figures which danced before his mind were as numb and unreal as the parts of his body. Sphinx! The man he had worked so hard to save! The judge was talking on, almost softly.

"There's a girl in St. Vincent's Hospital in a hysterical condition; she is threatened with a nervous breakdown, and her parents claim she left last night with Harmon."

The colonel felt of the stones of the fireplace viciously, as though he would like very much to pull one of them out. "I'll get to the bottom of this. It's all a frame-up on Sphinx. You can bet your last dollar on that."

"Well, it may be," the judge observed, "but right now it looks like a pretty clear case."

"Judge," the doctor said fiercely, "I cannot be convinced that Harmon did a dastardly thing like that."

"Twelve men could easily be convinced of it, Doctor. Particularly if the fellow's past were aired in open court."

"But something must be done about it, Judge Buck," the doctor cried desperately, biting his lip and clutching at his watch fob. "That boy must be given a chance."

"Judge Buck has even taken steps to see to it," Willingham put in. The hairs of his malignant mustache bristled like the quills of a porcupine. "He's taken steps."

The doctor turned eagerly to the judge.

"Yes, I think I can manage it, but it will take time. The girl's father is intractable, so far. He says he'll see the case through if it's the last thing he does on this earth. I have reminded him of the scandal, but he says that doesn't matter. I think he'll see that it does matter when it actually breaks. But we must wait. He may be persuaded to withdraw the case. If he does, we

are all right. If not, why the only thing we can do is to fight it out. Meanwhile, I think we had better look to Harmon's defense, for I don't think we can possibly avoid an examining trial."

All of the men looked very grave for a few moments. The doctor thought of several things to say, but the fear that they might be inexperienced held him back. It was the colonel who offered the first suggestion.

"We'll have to make it an alibi," he said solemnly.

"You mean——?" The doctor raised his eyes in alarm.

"He wasn't there," Judge Buck explained.

The doctor sighed. "I told you he wasn't."

FOURTEEN

I WISH you'd just take a look at *that*," Colonel Willingham said as he laid a copy of the noon edition of the *Press* on the chancellor's desk the following day. "I did the best I could to keep it out, but you can't do anything with that bunch." He unfolded the paper full length, smoothed out the crease, and stood back to grind his teeth while the chancellor read.

In one line the doctor had the ghastly story. Across the eight columns of the paper and halfway down the headline screamed:

FIFTY STUDENTS ENGAGE IN DRUNKEN BRAWL

"Why, I never saw anything so indecent, so nasty, so libelous," the doctor exclaimed, adjusting his great glasses and puckering with indignation.

What if the *Press* had no respectability? It had circulation, and the chancellor knew that hundreds of alumni and thousands of citizens would buy the *Press* that afternoon and read the sordid details of the university's disgrace while they smuggled the yellow sheet inside the folds of some competing paper—would read it on the street cars going home and would explain to their wives that they merely wanted to see "how a low-down paper like the *Press* would treat such an affair as this."

They would see. A series of glaring subheads broke the story into lewd, salacious episodes which carried the reader forward as eagerly as would the gradual undressing of a woman on the public square.

BOTTLES STREWN ALL OVER THE PLACE

WOMEN OF STREETS MINGLE WITH CO-EDS

CO-EDS DANCE HALF-NAKED

"PANTY-PULLING PARTY" A FEATURE

CHANCELLOR TRIES TO SUPPRESS CASE

The doctor read:

Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey, in company with Grover C. Willingham and Simeon Hawk, made a hasty trip to the office of the United States district attorney immediately upon hearing of the scandal at three o'clock Sunday morning in an effort to keep the story quiet. They tried to prevail upon the intrepid young attorney in charge to withdraw the case. The district attorney issued a statement at noon saying that he had concluded to allow the university to handle the minor offenders, but that the proprietor of Devil's Dam, Solomon Barsoom, would be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

As the doctor finished a hurried reading of the account he let the paper fall into his lap and froze into a living corpse. He was dead, yet he felt the terrible obligation to be alive and doing.

"Did you see this?" Willingham asked. He stood first on one foot, then on the other, and pointed to a huge single-column head in the middle of the page. The doctor looked up helplessly and said:

"Read it to me, Colonel."

Willingham read:

"A wealthy debutante is in a local hospital, according to accounts from the district attorney's office, as a result of an attack made upon her by a Martha Sumner University student at the disreputable party held Saturday night at Devil's Dam, five miles north of the university, by Kappa Beta Theta national drinking fraternity.

"District Attorney Simpson refused to reveal the name of the girl but stated that the case against the man, a prominent athlete on the varsity squad, will be pushed to the limit of his energies. . . .

"That's some encouragement," Willingham said when he had finished. The doctor looked wistfully at the floor and wondered what encouragement the business manager could find in that sordid story. "It's just as Buck said. The case won't get into court because of the scandal. They are even keeping the girl's name quiet. As long as they do that we're all right."

All right? The words seemed a mockery. Willingham and

Buck, with all their clever schemes, seemed the miserable comforters of Job. It was all so sordid and so terrible, so ghastly in every detail, that the doctor cried silently, not daring for a moment to let the tears come to his eyes. He found comfort in this inward crying. It was a clean and honest confession that he was beaten, that nothing he could do would justify himself in the sight of God. How long he sat that way he could not tell, but he was aware that Willingham paced up and down impatiently, waiting for him to take decisive steps. Suddenly he realized that the university would be ruined if he did not act at once and act magnificently. All of the money which moral people had poured into its coffers would be lost, its stone and mortar would cry out and curse God, its name would become a byword and a hissing on the lips of every upright man.

With his strong right arm he reached for the 'phone. "Tell Dean Buck of the School of Law I must see him at once." He banged the receiver in place before the startled operator could reply and turned to gaze once more with withering hatred upon the sheet before him.

"Willingham," he roared, "this has got to stop. I will not have the name of this university continually dragged in the mire of disgrace."

The tinkle of his bell cut short his futile oration, and the operator informed him that Judge Buck was in class. "That makes no difference," he shouted. "I must see him. Tell him it's very, very important." The fact that he could issue such an order brought a wave of reassurance over him, and a sense of mastery and power welled up in him. What was a class when the name of the university stood in danger of lasting degradation?

"I'll have to get out a statement right away," he said, half to himself. "This story must be refuted."

Willingham twiddled his thumbs and licked his mustache with his lower lip while the chancellor adjusted his glasses once more, pushed the black cord back over his ear, and reached for a memo pad. In the upper left-hand corner were the words, "From the Chancellor," and on it he began to scribble, covering the illegible marks with his hand as he wrote them. His jaws worked with a vigor which stretched the skin on his neck, and now and then he looked up thoughtfully at a far corner of the ceiling.

A few moments later Miss Brunt, cowering like a peasant in the presence of a lord, announced Judge Buck.

"Well, Horace," the judge said as he entered, smiling in the manner of a friendly cop, "what's all the excitement?"

"Excitement enough, Steve, excitement enough. Sit down. Have you seen this?" He tossed the judge a copy of the *Press*, and the judge, seating himself comfortably and placing a thumb in his vest, glanced at the sheet. Then he lay back like a dentist's patient and laughed with great rollicking sounds that echoed through the office like thunder in the mountains. The chancellor smiled peevishly and drummed the desk with his fingers.

"I never saw such a story," the judge chortled. "Never in all my career. It's perfectly ghastly. It's the damndest thing I ever read. What are you going to do about it?"

"That's what I called you here to decide," the chancellor replied impatiently. "I think we have good grounds for a libel suit, haven't we?"

"Grounds, I suppose," the judge agreed. Then he took a cheroot from his pocket and bit the end off meditatively. "But I don't think that has much to do with the case. You might recover damages, but think of the publicity you would get while you did it."

"That's it," Willingham piped up. "That's what I've been thinking."

"Why didn't you say, so, then?" the chancellor said irritably.

"You didn't ask me, and I didn't know what you were thinking about."

"Well, something's got to be done. Something's got to be done." Dr. Dickey got up from his chair and laid his fist on the desk. "We've got to do something at once, I tell you."

"I saw the girl's father this morning," Judge Buck announced with exasperating calmness. "He will not push the case against Harmon. We can make Harmon's alibi hold enough water now to get the case dismissed."

The chancellor sighed and wiped the perspiration from his face like a frightened Negro. "Well, that's something," he remarked generously. "Now if we can only refute this blasted story."

"I think you ought to issue a statement, Doctor," the business manager suggested.

"Yes, an official statement," the doctor agreed, his vitality and courage mounting at the thought of anything official. "Suppose I do that while you men are here. Steve, you can help me with the legal side of it." He reached for the buzzer and summoned Miss Brunt. She entered timidly and smiled with a great deal of embarrassment when the judge adjusted a chair for her at the chancellor's desk.

"Now, suppose we begin this way, gentlemen: 'My attention has been called to the fact that certain students are alleged to have been present at a certain party in the vicinity of the university last week?'"

"Excellent," the judge appraised.

"Do you like that?"

"Like it? It's magnificent. 'Alleged to have been present.' Splendid. Go on." He blew a ring of smoke from his rounded lips, and Maizie looked up at him as if to say, "You'd better be careful."

"If you'll allow me to make a suggestion," Colonel Willingham began.

"Certainly," the chancellor grunted.

"I think it ought to be put in form better suited for the press, you know."

"Oh, I'll leave that to you. You can fix that up. This is the official statement which I must issue. You can get it ready for the papers. Now, suppose we go on. Suppose we say something like this: 'I have had,' or rather, 'the chancellor has had no time in which to verify the truth or falsity of these charges'—'these serious charges,' you'd better make that—and am, is, therefore in a position only to express very grave regret that an affair such as reported in irresponsible sections of the local press should have been unfortunately identified with the university. In view of our recent revival of religion the administration cannot believe that any students were really present.' How's that?"

"That's not bad," Judge Buck said indulgently.

"No, it isn't," said the colonel. "But just here let me say a word. I think we ought to let the world know that everything

so far has been official and that we are investigating these charges to the last word."

"Bully," said the judge. "Are you?"

"Well, no," said the colonel, "but we must."

"That's well worth considering," Chancellor Dickey admitted, leaning back in his swivel chair. Maizie sighed and played a little tune on the desk with her pencil. "Yes, that's well worth considering," the doctor said again.

"We ought to say," resumed the colonel, "that we are doing something very special to detect whether the charges are true or not. You ought to appoint a special committee, Doctor, to probe these charges and report their findings back to you at once. If the Discipline Committee handled the case, you know, it would not look as much like we were after the rascals as if we had a special committee."

"Then suppose we put it something like this: 'A special committee for the most thoroughgoing investigation of the aforementioned charges and for the punishment of the guilty students, if any, has already been appointed by the chancellor and will begin its hearings at once. The findings of this committee extraordinary will be laid before the administration as quickly as possible, and upon these the university will base its judgment, and not upon idle and exaggerated rumors which a pandering press has grotesquely disseminated.'"

"You mean 'grossly,' don't you?" the judge inquired.

"What did I say?"

"Grotesquely."

"Well, make it 'grossly,' then. Or why not 'maliciously'?"

"I don't believe I would say that."

"All right. Just 'grossly.' Now, how do you think it sounds as a whole, though?" the doctor asked, looking at the two men for approval and scratching his belly absent-mindedly through a gap between the buttons of his vest.

"We've got everything but the committee," Willingham said.

"I think you'd better attend to that," Dr. Dickey instructed; it was simply a detail, after all. "You know the roster of the faculty better than I."

"Let me nominate it and you approve it."

"Certainly. Now, I think you'd better get this statement out

right away, Colonel," the chancellor advised. "Run it off at once, Miss Brunt, and let Colonel Willingham have a copy. Better try to get it on the wire, don't you think?"

"I reckon we had," said Colonel Willingham. "The Associated Press will pick up the *Press* story. It may even make a short paragraph in the New York papers," he added, not without pride.

The colonel went out with Maizie Brunt, signaling his adieu with a short gesture of the hand, and the chancellor and Judge Buck were left alone.

"Horace," the judge began, pinching his little white goatee thoughtfully, "you've got the makings of a great statesman."

The doctor's face lighted up as though someone had lighted a candle and stuck it down through his skull. "Do you really think so, Steve?" He had known all along that Steve was a man of judgment and character. He could feel his nerves tingle with excitement, and for a moment he thought a chill would creep up his legs and over his body. "Well, of course——"

"No, you're really good, if you just keep on. What a marvelous politician you would have made!"

"Oh, come now." The doctor obviously wanted not to think that he was being kidded. He shook his shoulders and crossed his legs and resumed an air of business. "What are we going to do about this investigation, Steve?"

"Better carry it through. You know what's best. I suspect the first session should find out that the affair was not a university party and that there is no chapter of Kappa Beta Theta on the campus. That's a great beginning. That's probably all you'll have to do if you are wise enough. Time effaces everything. Just don't keep the affair constantly before the public."

"That's good advice, Steve. You need not be greatly surprised if I act on it."

"Oh, I won't," the judge laughed, getting up and stretching himself like a house cat. Then he yawned as though with great relief. "We must shoot some golf, Horace. Won't you join me this afternoon?"

"I really have too much to do, Steve," the chancellor declined, waving his arm in an inclusive gesture at the neat little stacks on his desk. He caught sight of the *Press* again, wadded it up with his great hands, and threw it into the paper basket. "But

I'll play some other day. I need the exercise, and besides, I'd enjoy it," he confessed. Then he added, "You're coming over to dinner very soon."

"Am I? Very well. It will be delightful to be in your home again. But, say, why don't you run over and sit with me a while some evening? I'm all alone. I think we could spend a pleasant hour together."

"I'd be awfully glad to do that, Steve." He looked up a trifle wistfully at the judge. "Just the two of us, with no business or anything like that."

"Exactly. I'm going to expect you."

The chancellor's eyes followed the retreating shoulders of the judge; he seemed to be looking through a great film of distance which reduces objects to a fraction of their normal size. Even the noise of the closing door seemed far away. For a moment he continued to stare dreamily before him; then, with a brusque movement, he adjusted his collar, placed the ribbon of his glasses behind his ear, and picked up a stack of papers.

FIFTEEN

. . . showily indignant to pacify an aroused public conscience ; there is, indeed, a hint of subterfuge in the chancellor's official statement. . .

It was Malcolm's first attempt at subtlety, as well as his first sally since the Warren affair—an editorial he had written for the *Lasso* the first issue after the Devil's Dam episode. He felt hunted and heroic the day the piece appeared, walking erectly through the halls to see if any of the students with papers in their hands had turned to the editorial page. There was really no telling how much devilment he had done ; undoubtedly the chancellor, in a great choler, would call him on the carpet.

Toward eleven he posted himself faithfully at the door of Professor Finch's eco class and waited for Marion. The prospect of seeing her excited him mildly, though it had become almost a daily occurrence. His conquest of the doctor's daughter was a thing he studied critically and self-consciously. At times he appeared on the verge of triumph, then new difficulties would show their ugly heads. Just now rumors down at the fraternity house had it that Marion had been seen several times of late with Sphinx in her Cadillac ; he had himself seen her talking to the big beef trust in the halls during the past week. His affair with her, he mused, was about to resolve itself into a Sphinx riddle.

At five minutes until eleven an alarm sounded, and the students emptied out of Professor Finch's class like a panicky subway crowd Malcolm had once seen in Times Square. Marion was among the last to come, and he could see that she was prettily annoyed.

"He certainly is an old codger !" she pouted, with a backward nod at the cadaverous little professor.

"What's the matter, Bozo?" he asked.

"Aw, he says he's going to give us a quiz every day next week on railroad problems. Eco's terribly stupid."

"So's everything else," he retorted philosophically. "Why pick on eco?"

"Well, I need something to take my spite out on," she answered with an air of angry cuteness which showed that she had already forgotten the ardors of eco. "Hell, Malcolm," she went on as though she had just discovered him. "You won't let that mean old prof hurt me; will you?"

He squeezed her arm reassuringly and straightened up to his full five feet nine. "He'll not hurt a hair on your lovely head," he said, and he had the sensation of really protecting her.

They were squirming through the *mêlée* of students at a point where two halls converged, and Malcolm, still feeling protective, now and then caressed her.

"Is that you?" she teased.

"Certainly it is," he snapped. "Who'd you think it was?"

"It might have been lots of folks."

"Yeah, I bet it might. What do you mean?"

"Nothing. You know. Just look at all the folks around here. It might have been that handsome knight back there." She pointed over his shoulder and smiled at the man behind them in a way that made Malcolm want to choke her.

"I'll bet you wish it was," he said, deeply offended.

"Ah, come on, now, Iago."

"Who?"

"Iago. Haven't you had that in Shakespeare yet?"

"Oh, Iago?"

"Yes. I guess you thought he was one of my boy friends."

Just then she spoke to someone with a good deal more ado than Malcolm thought necessary, and he turned to see who it was. It was Tommy Orr.

"I want to see you some time," Tommy called from the group with which he was standing.

"Make it soon," she bantered.

"I'll be damned," Malcolm wailed. "You certainly are collecting a fine exhibit of boy friends."

"You're exhibit A," she said gently.

"Yeah, and look what I'm classed among. Damn, you've got a regular menagerie. Have you seen Sphinx lately?" he ventured, as though thinking of him for the first time.

"Not lately. It's been more than an hour," she sighed.

He made no reply. He wanted both to believe and not to be-

lieve that the sigh was a token of real pining. If it were, he could feel sublimely miserable; if it were not, he could feel like a conqueror secure enough to indulge his concubine certain latitude. He had the uncomfortable feeling, however, that he was making a mess and not a conquest. There was something enigmatical about Marion. She made him feel ambivalent, as Amon would say. He wanted to squeeze and to strangle her at the same time.

They parted as they reached the post office. He offered to buy her a drink at the sticky counter near by, but she declined; he suggested an Eskimo pie, but still she declined. Irritably he turned away from her to his box. There was a letter from home which he opened hastily and examined, taking out the check and stowing away the letter in his pocket. There was also an envelope addressed in a hand which he recognized to be that of the blonde he had met in Colorado the summer before. And there was an envelope with the imprint of the university upon it. Frozen with curiosity, he held it up to the light and ripped off one end. It was from the office of the dean, very brief and to the point:

DEAR MR. LEEDS:

I have been checking over the standing of those in student positions and find that you are below the required rating in two courses. According to our regulations, one must be passing ten hours of work to hold a student position. Since you are not, it becomes my unpleasant duty to ask you to withdraw from the editorship of the *Lasso*. Of course you understand that our regulations are made for the best interests of the student, and I assure you that my ruling in this instance is made on the same basis.

Very truly yours,
OSCAR BANKS,
Dean.

Instantly the editorial he had written lay printed in bold-face type upon the letter in his hand, and beneath it, as though covered by a Ben Day screen, he could see the grinning face of a runt he recognized as Willingham. Shortly the runt faded out into the towering figure of the chancellor with beetled brow. It was all perfectly clear in a single inspired second.

"That dirty old bastard," he moaned; and, his mind inflamed

at the thought of so dire a persecution, he hastened off to tell the news.

II

Dean Easton was a bottled specimen of the old academic type, and he looked the part. He was wiry and bristling, even to his hair, and instead of growing obese he had grown steadily thinner, until now the points of his anatomy stuck out like the outline numerals he gave his classes. He believed as profoundly in academic ideals as Hawk believed in efficiency, economy, and publicity, and there was something of the same taint of mysticism and supersition in both of them. Easton had taught for thirty years, twenty of which he had spent in one school. He had been academic overlord of that institution until Chancellor Meacham invited him to occupy a similiar commanding position at Martha Sumner. Meacham had, in fact, chosen him to build up the graduate work which had existed in name only during the ribald days of Chancellor Sweeney.

To achieve the work he was appointed to do, Dean Easton had adhered strictly to the letter of the catalogue, counseling undergraduates petulantly and pointing with finality to marked passages in the stated requirements when any question arose. Through long years of cloistered life he had developed a vast jealousy for academic ideals, and he viewed with a growing fear the modern encroachment of the world upon the campus. He reckoned vaguely with the fact that money had to be raised, but, Victorian that he was, he could not see that the acquisition of funds became more and more the game of the whole university, and that those specifically charged with business duties were, by the nature of modern organization, exalted to seats of chief authority in the academic chamber. In the scheme of his old-fashioned thinking, for example, boys came to school to study, and if they had odd moments they played football.

It is not surprising, then, that he had conceived for Willingham an immediate and violent dislike. The uppish little business manager with his iridescent mustache was simply a poacher on sacred preserves. The accession of Dickey to the chancellorship he openly regarded as scandalous. Indeed, the whole world seemed to him to be in a bad way here of late, what with a

business manager who had unlimited power and a chancellor who had been chosen almost entirely because of his Rotarian respectability and his avowed intent to devour heretics.

III

A majority of the dons had assembled by the time Dean Easton reached the executive chamber where the meeting of the faculty was to be held. McKnight was holding a chair for him, and after a brusque handshake with his colleague and a few nods to those around him he sat down.

"This is distinctly *not* the amen corner," McKnight observed, motioning to Dean Keith and Professors Sedberry and Farrell, who sat immediately in front of them.

"I dare say the chancellor will ask us to separate," Easton replied. "He will suspect a conspiracy at once."

When the chancellor finally entered, he looked indeed as though he had smelled a conspiracy. There was a nervous glance in the direction of the insurgent group, a few words of hasty conference with Dean Banks, then the meeting came to order, but the doctor continued to dart looks toward Easton and his gang. There were several harmless discussions, with Dean Banks for the most part raising questions and answering them as he gazed sagely over his dirty spectacles. Nothing of moment occurred, and there was no noticeable tautening of the nerves of the group until the report of the scholarship committee. Dean Banks made the report.

"You all know," he announced, "that we are going to have to be more rigid in our scholarship requirements. Chancellor Dickey is particularly anxious about this," he said, with a wry smile and a nervous little nod in the direction of the chair. "And particularly," he went on, coughing in embarrassment at so frequent a use of the word "particularly," "is this true of those who hold student positions.

"Now, we all know that these extra-curricular activities can often take up much too much time. So I have made a pretty careful check of the list, Mr. Chancellor, and I have notified all of those who are below standing."

"May I ask how many that was?" asked Professor Sedberry.

"There's only one just yet," the dean replied casually and added, "Only one, I am glad to say." He hesitated a moment, fondling a little piece of paper in his hand. "That's Mr. Leeds, the editor of the *Lasso*—a very able young man, by the way, but below average in two courses." He had obviously finished, and it was evident that he wanted very badly to sit down. He looked around the room a moment and then said, "I believe that's all, if there are no questions."

"But there is one question," Professor Farrell spoke up. "One I should like very much to ask."

"Very well," said the chancellor in a tone of gruff indulgence.

"I wonder if your investigations carried you as far as athletes?" Farrell inquired.

"Why, no, I don't believe so," the dean replied, a trifle chagrined and frightened.

"Do you think they will?" The question was impertinent, and several members shifted from one buttock to another in alarm.

"I think I can answer that question for you, Dean Banks," the chancellor said, rising and then stretching to his full height. "It would be quite pointless for Dean Banks to make any investigation of the scholastic standing of athletes, as I presume Mr. Farrell well knows. This whole question is one which lies properly within the province of the chairman of the faculty committee on athletics, and whose business it is to pass on eligibility before every game. Am I not right, Professor Kingfisher?"

"Entirely," Professor Kingfisher replied, nodding with great and emphatic ado.

"I thought as much. Are there any other questions?" the chancellor went on.

There were no more just then, and the faculty settled back comfortably and sighed to think how disagreeable things might have become. Farrell sat down mumbling, and Easton leaned forward as though in prayer. Sedberry turned and whispered behind his hand to McKnight:

"When was that old mossback made chairman of the faculty committee on athletics?"

"When Dickey came," McKnight replied. "Why don't you keep posted, Professor? I thought you knew more dirt than any man on the campus."

"That's a morsel I missed," he retorted. "That's worse than any other dirt I know."

The chancellor rapped for order and stood up again to his forbidding height. "Now, if I may have your attention a few moments longer," he commenced, with a significant glance in the direction of the naughty boys who persisted in talking in class, "I'd like to bring a matter of some importance to your attention.

"I am sure you have all heard of the unfortunate occurrence at a resort called Devil's Dam a few days ago. You may or may not have heard that some of our students were alleged to have been present at that party—that is, alleged to have been present by the pandering press of our community.

"This charge was most unfortunate and most serious, and while I am sure that most of you agreed with me in not giving any credence to it, I thought it best to take steps at once to protect the name of the university. In doing this I was sure I had your heartiest coöperation."

He paused and wiped his lips with a colored handkerchief, at the same time adjusting the mischievous ribbon of his spectacles behind his huge ear. The sound of his voice seemed still to ring through the room.

"I am glad to inform you," he continued, just as the last echo of the word "coöperation" had died out, "that the committee which I asked to investigate the affair finds that no chapter of a disreputable fraternity known as Kappa Beta Theta exists on the campus and that the recent affair was in no sense a university affair. I am sure all of you rejoice with me to have this information."

The chancellor was reaching for his notes to take up the next item on the agenda when Dean Easton dangled to his feet and said curtly:

"I rise to a point of order."

"Yes," said the doctor, removing his glasses and looking at him like a lion tamer.

"I think I speak the mind of a large part of the faculty when I say that the chancellor's casual manner of informing us of this affair is most unsatisfactory," he began. His jaws twitched beligerently, and he waited for breath to go on.

"You could have read about it in the papers," the doctor retorted.

"In the first place, I don't read the kind of papers you said carried this story. But you know my meaning, I believe. I mean that the faculty has not had any hand in this affair until now."

"Well?" The chancellor raised his eyebrows. Then it occurred to him to say: "And why not? I appointed a special committee from the faculty to make the investigation."

"Without the consent of the faculty."

"In your judgment, Professor, should I have had a special session of the general faculty for that purpose?" The doctor's sarcasm was evidence that he held himself under control by sheer force of determination.

"Certainly. Or may I ask," Dean Easton went on, pulling at his collar like a choking man, "why was not the Discipline Committee allowed to handle this case?"

"I have fortunately already answered that question, Mr. Easton, to Mr. Farrell, to whom it should have been answered. This was, I may repeat, a special case and demanded to be handled in a special way. I hope that answers your questions satisfactorily, now."

"I am not sure that it does," the graduate dean held on tenaciously. "There are several others I'd like to ask, if I had time. One of them would be why it was, if this was not a university affair, that three high officials of the university went down to the Federal Building and got a score of our students released."

He paused for breath and nerve, his gaunt form shaking with the excitement of a moment he had long awaited. If a statue of the chancellor as he stared at Dean Easton could have been carved, it would have become a classic of human fury. His great jaw was firmly set and his lips were pressed white against his teeth; those who dared look at him that moment never forgot his power.

"My private conviction is," Easton gasped, "that certain very indispensable athletes were present at that affair and that this report is a conspiracy of silence to protect them." There was a glimmer of savage fear in his eyes as he finished, and the last words were pitched in the high tone of a man desperately tormented. Deadly silence settled on the room, and everyone looked at the floor as the graduate dean sank into his chair.

As for the chancellor, he was as swollen as a toy balloon, and it was fully a moment, a moment of deadly and excruciating silence preceding a devastating explosion, before he could speak.

"Mr. Easton, I resent profoundly the silly and groundless charge you have had the temerity to make in the presence of this faculty. I am amazed that anyone could be guilty of such gross misrepresentation. I knew that you would make trouble of a serious character sooner or later, but I did not dream, sir, I did not dream in my wildest fancies that you would behave so disgracefully. I cannot imagine such a shameful departure from the paths of common decency.

"Now, I want to say right here and now," he thundered, "that I am sick and tired of this bickering and backbiting on the part of the faculty. It has got to stop. I will not permit my administration to be blocked at every turn by obstructionists with the vision of gnats."

The chancellor dared not go beyond that phrase. He knew a climax when he reached one, and, checking himself abruptly, he drew out his colored handkerchief and wiped the perspiration from his face. The crowd before him was stunned. Not a man moved. He waited a moment defiantly for another interruption, glanced around the room fiercely, and went on:

"I am here to achieve a big task. You are here for that same purpose. We have that in common, and I want your coöperation. We are joined together in the greatest enterprise ever given to man—the education of men and women for leadership in this great commonwealth of ours. It is a challenging task, and I hope I can count on you for the last drop of your energies. You are adjourned."

The faculty filed out, and over the whole group a spell of silence had fallen which was not broken until its members had congregated in small groups outside.

"It's a challenging task, all right," McKnight parroted as soon as he had crossed the threshold of the executive chamber. Then he laughed uproariously and Professor Sedberry joined in mildly. "It's the task of building up the best football team in the South. I hope you're ready to coöperate, Professor."

Easton looked at the two sadly. "That's the beginning of my end," he mused.

"I'm afraid it means the end of all of us," Farrell added, by way of consoling the graduate dean. "I don't care to be under the direction of a maniac, personally."

At that moment Professor Kingfisher approached, accompanied by Professor Finch, and Professor Sedberry remarked:

"I think I'd better be moving on. I've got a lecture to prepare. Anyone going my way?"

Farrell was, and the two went off together, leaving McKnight and Easton alone and talking about the next issue of the catalogue.

ON SUNDAY afternoons the chintz apartment of Janet Rawlings became the town tavern of her curious assortment of friends. She would "throw" a tea—and teas were not "thrown" by just anybody on the campus. Of course, there were stand-up teas when a visiting delegate from sorority headquarters came out to inspect, and there were fraternity open houses and all that; but real teas were rare. There was something Eastern, English, and literary about them, too. At an open-house or a stand-up tea, one was sociable and paraded the virtues of one's fraternity. At Janet's teas one was intellectual and revealed the quality of one's mind. So it was that her two-rooms-and-bath became by the mere fact of a tea the refuge of young intellectuals, most of whom were unattractive people with radical ideas.

Sometimes Dudley Farrell, the belligerent young professor of political science, just dropped in, as he explained, and stayed until everyone else had gone. Amon Kibler attended, talking Schopenhauer and atheism and converting a multitude of heathen by his attacks on the Christian concept of the soul. Malcolm Leeds loafed thoughtfully about, passing from one group to another like a politician among women delegates, trying to appear above it all and invariably stationed at a point from which he could survey the largest acreage of naked thighs and lurid bloomers. Helen Morse hovered, a little mystified, and Leeds wondered whether she was sophisticatedly naïve or naïvely sophisticated.

Eunice Allen came regularly with handsome Toby Wells. Eunice was dark and beautiful. "She dresses to her face," Malcolm had once said and had liked the phrase immediately. Janet thought she concealed her figure too adroitly, but Malcolm disagreed, pointing out that Eunice's figure was too much like Annette Kellerman's—graceful and somehow pure, a thing of beauty and not a thing to prompt the glands. She was smart and quiet, seating herself in one of the comfortable chairs, motioning Toby to stay near her and waiting for those who wanted to see her to come and seek her out. Toby waited at her beck, talking to those near him of grades and profs and the prospects for next

year's team. He was an athlete and a good student—one of those hybrid fellows who vindicate the scholarly life to students and stimulate interest in athletics among members of the faculty. He lived cleanly and talked passably; he was a gladiator who read books.

The occasions were really very jolly, though Janet liked to think of herself as an exceptionally shrewd patron of the arts in a satirical novel who was really terribly bored with it all. She said to herself repeatedly that she was an explorer who had set up a menagerie with a specimen from every clime—a menagerie which she guarded with satanic solicitude.

And certainly the apartment looked like a zoo the Sunday afternoon following the chancellor's bluster before the faculty. Someone opened the door to admit Professor McKnight, and the chatter and confusion left him startled. He looked up as if he expected to see someone swinging from the scrawny chandelier or someone else leaping over to light on his shoulders.

Malcolm Leeds was of course the first to sight him officially.

"Ah," he exclaimed, executing a bravo gesture which attracted attention rather than conveyed welcome, "the professor, as I live."

"You come too unostentatiously," Amon declaimed, and Marjorie Tyndall, whom all the boys called Little Miss Muffett, giggled delightedly. "You should have had an army for an usher and the neigh of horse to tell of your approach." Amon left Little Miss Muffett and Reba Shelton, to whom he had been explaining the logic of illogic, and came toward McKnight with a salaam.

"He flashes upon us like a sword from its golden sheath," contributed Edward LaGrande, a young man with sensitive nostrils who had contributed verse to "the various magazines," meaning the *Buccaneer* and the *Weekly Lasso*. Sella Faber, whom Malcolm had dubbed the Sheba of intellectuals, looked up rapturously from her conversation with Edward and applauded his musical utterance with a pursed look and a pat of the hand. It was nice to have any sort of an excuse to pat the hand of a poet.

McKnight, relieved of the necessity of making any reply by the very nature of the greeting which met him, faced Janet at the tea table with a bow which could be taken as either serious or

derisive. "Miss Rawlings, my greetings. Miss Morse. Mr. Phelps."

"So glad you're here, Professor," Janet said. "Will you take cream or lemon?" It was a ritual she enjoyed gravely.

"Straight." He glanced absently around the room, seeing first those he wanted to see. "How do you do, Miss Allen. Mr. Wells. Oh, hello, Farrell," he exclaimed, catching sight of the young political science professor talking to Eleanor Wolf, queen of the last year's May fête.

"Hello, Mac," Farrell replied, rising a bit impatiently to shake the English professor's hand. "I'll bet you're here for gossip."

"I am."

"It's rampant. You know Miss Wolf?"

"Yes," he said gently. "Miss Wolf is in one of my classes."

"Come get your tea, Professor," Malcolm called.

"It's growing tepid," Amon added.

"Oh, yes. I forgot. I want to see you, Farrell."

"Sure. See you again, Mac," Farrell replied, picking up the conversation with Miss Wolf—"So beyond doubt he was guilty of . . ."

McKnight accepted his tea and stepped back to stir it.

"Wells," he said suddenly, swallowing his tea as though it were liver medicine, "were you there?"

"Ubiquitous Wells," Amon put in.

Tony grinned and Eunice bridled. "Where's that, Professor?"

"Devil's Dam."

"No, sir. I wasn't there, Dr. McKnight. I had a previous engagement."

"Almost everyone else seems to have had," commented Mr. Phelps with a smile. Phelps always looked as though he had followed the profession of bookseller for years. He taught Elizabethan poetry.

"Yeah. Even Sphinx," Harry Duvall volunteered, and then gave one of those great, inexplicable guffaws that had given rise to the rumor that he had spiritual halitosis.

"Sphinx was up studying chemistry all night," Malcolm announced, glad to supply official details. "That's a hot one."

"Why not memorizing Shelley's ode 'To a Skylark'?" asked Edward LaGrande, his nose twitching at the experience of saying

something right out loud and feeling a bit profane over speaking of Sphinx and Shelley in the same breath.

"Seriously—" Amon began, and Malcolm moved away, Helen went into the kitchenette for hot water, Toby and Eunice started a conversation of their own, while Janet turned to a plain girl seated near her—"seriously, Professor," Amon went on undiscouraged, "don't you feel that this episode is going to affect the administration most vitally?"

"I am quite sure that it will," McKnight replied, looking at the fine array of legs hanging from the day bed and wondering what would have happened if he had seen such a display when he was thirteen. "But you must admit Dickey handled the thing adroitly for the most part."

"Yes. In a Machiavellian fashion, I should say. Almost Mephistophelian."

"Well, I wouldn't call Dickey Mephistophelian," McKnight observed. "I think we can find a much shorter word that fits him. Leeds, let's hear your story. I understand you are no longer editor of our student paper."

"I am not," Leeds said proudly, willing enough to return to the conversation if it were to be about himself. "I have resigned as a protest."

"Against what?"

"Everything," Janet suggested.

"Don't be silly," the young journalist bristled. "Against Dickey's high-handed methods, his autocracy and things like that."

"What did he say to you?" McKnight asked.

"He didn't say much," Leeds hedged. He exercised his lips thoughtfully before he spoke. "Of course, he didn't like that editorial I wrote on Devil's Dam."

"I didn't either," said Janet.

"Come, now," McKnight scolded, "let him alone, Janet. What didn't he like about it?"

"Oh, I don't know, Professor. I really don't. He just didn't like it at all. I looked him right square in the eye and told him I didn't care whether he liked it or not."

"You did? Then what did he say?"

"Why, he said, 'Well, I don't like it, anyway.' That was about all there was to it."

McKnight drew a cigarette from a badly battered package which he carried in his hip pocket and rolled it in his hand before lighting it. "Leeds," he said, "I never saw you so reticent. You're sure Dickey didn't say anything about the fact that you are failing in two courses?"

"No, he didn't," Leeds retorted with spirit. Then he added reluctantly, "Dean Banks did later, but Dickey didn't."

"So you heard from the dean?"

Amon sighed and tried to think of a long word. "Such peregrination," he said at last.

"Yes, I had a note from the dean," Leeds admitted, as sullenly as a murderer driven to the last corner by the third degree. "He said I wasn't eligible under the student activity rule to continue. It's a clear case of suppressing public opinion."

"So it seems," agreed McKnight; "but why didn't you say so sooner?"

"Ah, don't worry, Professor, I'm not through yet."

"What do you mean?"

"Just wait and see. It may take me some time, but I'll be heard."

"Who's your successor?"

"Seth Roberts. He's timid. Dickey'll do just what he wants with him. Besides, the university's going to pay the editor a salary beginning next year."

The aggressive Harry Duvall had crowded in to talk with Miss Wolf, and Farrell approached the three men who stood in front of the tea cart. "Mac, it was quite a mess, wasn't it?"

"Did you ever hear of anything to equal it?"

"Or even approximate it?" Amon asked.

"I hear your committee got crowded out," McKnight said, as though he doubted it.

"Worse. Overlooked. I was ready to call the Discipline Committee and the chancellor got wind of it. He called me on the 'phone and said he had already appointed a special committee. I said, 'Why did you do that?' He said, 'Well, this is a special case.' Nice sense of values, that."

"There's something rotten in the State of Denmark," Amon observed with a profound shake of his head.

The two men ignored the instructor and Farrell went on: "Dickey lost the support of the faculty Friday if he only knew it."

"I doubt it," McKnight countered. "You can't imagine what measly cowards most professors are. I dare say he made a good impression, though I was never more humiliated."

"Everyone I have talked to is disgusted," said Farrell.

"You've talked to the wrong crowd, that's all."

"Well, I don't see what he can do if he does lose the support of his faculty."

"That's simple enough," Janet interrupted. "He can get a new faculty."

"Exactly," agreed McKnight. "Besides, a faculty isn't a cabinet. Dickey has the board solidly behind him, and the more he straight-arms the faculty the more the board will support him."

"But how can he get over whatever programme he has if he loses the faculty?" Farrell persisted.

"My dear fellow," McKnight remonstrated, as though talking to a child, "a faculty is totally unimportant in the university of to-day. It has to be eliminated altogether from the administration before the administration *can* achieve. You watch Dickey. He has the faculty out of the way, scared to make a move. That leaves him with a free hand. Once the faculty, composed of a bunch of theorists and academicians, gets a hand in the thing, the administration is embarrassed. That's Dickey's strategy. To remove the faculty from the semblance of control they have had. As Miss Rawlings says, it's simple enough to recruit a new faculty. In fact, I think Dickey will probably create enough new schools to give him a majority of faculty support in case he needs it."

"I think it's perfectly evident," Farrell said, determined to return to disagreeable items, "that athletes are going to be petted and pampered around this school in the future."

The two men had been talking rather intently, and they had failed to notice that the conversation elsewhere had lulled. Farrell's last statement was as audible as if he had been lecturing to the group.

Toby Wells moved uncomfortably and then said respectfully but firmly:

"I haven't noticed it. We fellows get out there and work our heads off for the school and these birds," he took in the group with a gesture, "sit up in the grandstand and drink soda pop and smoke cigarettes. But let an athlete do something a little wrong and the whole school's down on him—callin' him tough and kickin' him a little further."

"I like that," said Edward LaGrande. "I think that's a delightful way to put it. So incongruous and contrasting. Men of brawn, men of spawn, we might say."

Eunice sat forward tensely, ready to strike in defense of her giant.

"Me for soda pop," Mr. Phelps confessed, smiling very broadly to excuse the construction of his sentence.

"I think it's a good deal like going to war," observed Little Miss Muffett, seating herself on the arm of a chair. "Some men go and some stay at home. We all work. But those at the front are bravest and most deserving!"

So long a speech obviously frightened her, and Janet, who was about to say something, smiled instead.

"Yeah, that's it," boomed Harry Duvall, anxious to get into the conversation and knowing that to agree with someone was the best way. "Besides, if you ask me, I say the preachers are the ones that are petted around this school."

"Ain't it so?" agreed Edward LaGrande, forgetting Shelley for the moment. "These young theologues are the ones who are toadied to from every angle. They make me sick."

McKnight and Farrell stood silent, the dead nucleus of a group they had created. It would be unwise for them to mingle in what had become an undergraduate row, so they toed the rug and seemed to listen. At last Amon announced very solemnly:

"Of course the fundamental question——"

"Is whether Professor McKnight," interrupted Janet, "will have another cup of tea."

"No more, thank you, Miss Rawlings. I really must run along now. Farrell, are you coming with me?"

"I'll drop by to-night," Farrell replied.

McKnight went out, and a sort of serenity returned to the room. There were giggles here and there and Duvall's laugh ex-

ploded at regular intervals. Malcolm sat down and talked in a preoccupied manner, while Amon told two delighted co-eds that the longest word he knew was "dichlorotetrahydroxybenzene."

"And I found it," he said convulsively, "in a book called *Eighteen Thousand Words Often Mispronounced*. Often!"

SEVENTEEN

YES, Horse, I know, my dear. But you haven't done anything really *constructive*."

Horse looked deep into his plate and sulked. He had quashed a dangerous investigation with speed and firmness; he had seen to it that federal authorities abandoned their threatened indictment; he had enlisted the able Judge Buck and thrown a scandalous case out of court; by a judicious handling of all reports and facts he had given the university an unblemished name in spite of all that had been done by Easton and his crowd to blot her 'scutcheon. What was more, he had silently rid the community of a dangerous radical, and here was Virginia saying that he had done nothing. The woman was incomprehensible.

"Of course, dear, I don't want to belittle what you have done," she went on. "You handled a nasty situation well enough, I suppose. You are to be complimented on that."

You wouldn't compliment me on it, the doctor retorted mentally to an image of the woman he kept stored in his mind for such occasions.

Meanwhile Virginia proceeded to catalogue his missteps, and while he kept denying to himself that a woman's opinion amounted to anything, her disapproval cut him sharply. Soon he had the uncomfortable sense of being a wretched failure in the very midst of success. That was the feeling Virginia so often gave him. Willingham, Banks, Hawk—the whole executive group—encouraged and congratulated him. Virginia was always running him down.

"I hope you won't misunderstand me, Horse . . ."

No, I won't. Unfortunately.

". . . You see, you gained nothing by getting up and running down to the Federal Building at three o'clock in the morning. . . ."

Two o'clock. Kept down a scandal that would have ruined the university and my administration. That's all.

". . . The story got out anyway . . ."

Not as bad as it would have been if I hadn't done what I did.

" . . . And you have been running around the campus like a chicken with its head cut off ever since. . . ."

You expect me to sit calmly around and let the university go to the devil?

" . . . You haven't paused for thought. You haven't taken your bearings. You haven't begun to do anything for its *constructive* welfare. . . ."

Heavens! Give me time. Do you think I can transform the whole plant in the twinkling of an eye?

" . . . Have you nothing to say, Horse?"

The doctor found himself lost in a labyrinth of subterranean replies to her remarks, and it was with difficulty that he recaptured the sound and meaning of her last words in time to avoid an embarrassing silence.

"Well, I hardly know," he said at last. "I have been thinking, though, that the item you mentioned about constructive work is really the big one. I have been thinking about that a great deal—giving it a good part of my best thought and attention here of late, though I admit I have been pretty busy with other matters."

"That's just it," she retorted triumphantly. "You have been busy with unimportant matters. Just what have you been doing?"

"Well, there's my correspondence," the doctor replied desperately.

"Your correspondence! How absurd to let that take all of your time, Horse. I should think," she continued, drunk with the chancellorship, "that you would have some young man to whom all your letters could be turned over every day. He could answer most—or really all of them—and let you sign the ones that really needed your name. Don't you think that would work?" she challenged.

"It probably would, Virginia. I think I'll look into that."

"Yes, I would. They ought to provide you with some young man who would do that and nothing more; or he might take still other work off your shoulders."

Such as running the university, the chancellor thought, but he said: "You are right, Virginia. I must get some constrictive

programme on foot right away. I'll give that a good deal of intensive thought the next few days."

But for the time being he was most interested in the visit he had planned with Judge Buck that evening, and he soothed Virginia as best he could and left the dining room. He felt all agog over that visit, just as though there were something romantic about it. There really wasn't, of course, but it was the nearest thing to romance that the doctor had experienced for a long time. It seemed so superb not to have any point for calling on Judge Buck. "Just come over, and we'll smoke cigars and chat in peace," the judge had said. No business worries, no moral issues to discuss. Nothing in sight but a prospect to chat in peace. It was just the chance to listen to the engaging talk of the distinguished Judge Buck that enthralled him.

He felt as he climbed the stairs to his room like a little boy who had been given permission to play out after dark. The door to Marion's room stood ajar, and he looked involuntarily through the opening as he passed. His daughter stood before the mirror of her dressing table, a powder puff in her hand, dressed only in scandalously scanty underwear. The doctor paused and was ashamed of himself for doing it, yet he could not help taking in the few details of her attire. From the room came the scent of perfume, elusive, yet pungent.

Shaking his head, he hastened on. Marion had left the table early. She was going out. With whom? What a pity Virginia didn't give more attention to the rearing of their daughter and less to the running of the university. His mood of jubilation was gone. He could not tell precisely what it was, but he had a feeling of fright and despair as he dressed. He wanted very badly to walk resolutely into Marion's room, tell her what he thought of her lingerie, and tell her, too, that she must stay at home with her mother that night. But the realization that he would seem quite ridiculous if he did anything like that checked him. Besides, he might incur her enmity. And yet . . .

II

"So you see the predicament it left me in."

Judge Buck lay back in the soft confines of his chair and

smiled with a mingling of triumph and content. There was nothing he liked better than to relate a long yarn during which the net of circumstance closed relentlessly about him until the most experienced novelist would seem unable to extricate him. At the moment when he was farthest in the bear's cave, he always lay back and pointed out the predicament he was in.

To-night the doctor sat forward eagerly and tensely, the butt of a half-smoked cigar hanging loosely from his fingers, forgotten and smelling very bad. Someone would have had to tell him twice that he was chancellor of Martha Sumner University—a fact he had not forgotten for months.

"Well, what did you do about it?" he asked breathlessly. It was as though the reel had caught fire just as the shapely heroine had been let down by a rope into a den of lecherous thieves. But Buck only smiled and seemed lost in his own reverie. Desperately the doctor reviewed the story in his own mind.

It began in the early days when Buck had gone West for his health and had hung out his shingle in the stormy village of Old Tascosa. At that time Old Tascosa was the county seat and the scene of the trials of bad men. Most of those trials were conducted in the manner of a kangaroo court, but soon after Buck's arrival the new district judge took it into his head that he would really have a serious trial of Bad Bob Smithers for the murder of Shorty Grey over a gambling debt in the One-Eyed Owl Saloon. His first step was to offer a reward for the apprehension of Bad Bob. This was nothing out of the ordinary, and one of Bad Bob's friends claimed the money and captured the outlaw, with the understanding between them that the reward money would be split as soon as the trial was over.

It soon became evident that the new judge, a man by the name of Browning, had no intention of holding a kangaroo court. He instructed the sheriff to throw a double guard around Bad Bob, both in jail and in court, and he charged the attorneys and the veniremen before he started the trial. It was a strange turn for fate to take, in the mind of Bad Bob, and it was not long before his gang in the foothills had word of the affair. They came riding into town and took up their position in court, but the judge only laid two forty-fives out on his bench and instructed the district attorney to go on with the case. The net of evidence gradually

closed in, showing that Bad Bob had not shot in a fit of temper but had planned for a long time to kill Shorty and used the gambling debt only as a pretense.

Then one morning the district attorney wasn't on hand when court began. Bad Bob's gang was in its regular place, sitting there as stolid and immobile as Mexicans, just as though nothing had happened. They found the state's attorney that afternoon in a clump of bushes on the banks of the Canadian River, and the best count anyone could make revealed twenty bullets in him.

Why the judge was spared, God and the gang only knew, but gossip had it that even bad men held the court in superstitious awe; after all, the district attorney was only a pest and an enemy. Whatever the case, Judge Browning appointed Steve Buck to take up the prosecution.

"I say predicament," Judge Buck picked up the story, "because that was the beginning of a long series of predicaments in my life. I've had hardly anything else." He appeared suddenly very tired, then the fascination of his own narrative began to enchant him once more, and he hurried on.

"I took the case. Not that I wanted it, but because there simply wasn't anything else to do. I had to earn a living somehow, and besides, I had to show that crowd I had the guts to carry it through. And believe me, it was interesting. I finished up the evidence without being shot, and the judge charged the jury. He read his charge one night about nine o'clock, and court was adjourned until the next morning, when the arguments were to begin. The jury was locked in the calaboose as a precaution, and the judge suggested that I had better sleep with them there. Somehow that seemed a little cowardly to me, and I decided I'd go on to my room over the One-Eyed Owl Saloon.

"It's funny about Shep," the judge went on, as Shep got up slowly from the hearth and perched himself on his haunches, regarding his master querulously, as though poised for immediate action. "He seems to think he can help me out of it. I wish I had had you that night, Shep; you'd have been a greater comfort to me than you've been since, even.

"Of course, I didn't go to sleep. I tried to read over my notes and formulate my summation of the case and all that, but I couldn't concentrate. We didn't have Pelmanism in those days,

and it wouldn't have done me any good if we had. There were all sorts of noises downstairs. A trial was a carnival up in those parts, you know, and all of the bad men had ridden in to enjoy the fun.

"I kept my lamp burning, and I reckon I must have sat with my face to the door about an hour when I heard a crowd coming up the stairs. They stopped in front of my door. I heard some whispering, and then there was a knock, not made with a fist, but with something solid.

"I said, 'Come in.' I tried to make it sound steady, but I'll bet it sounded like the tremolo on a pipe organ and about as shrill and faint as high C. I just sat where I was and didn't get up. I had a gun out on the table by my side. The door opened, and five or six rawboned fellows stalked into the room. They smelled pretty much of whisky, but they seemed pretty well behaved. Tom Larson, a man with half as many notches on his gun as Billy the Kid, acted as leader. He sidled over to me and drawled:

"'Buck, I come to tell you there's a friend of yorn sick over on the flat.'

"'Who is it?' I said.

"'Ed Bassett. He asked us boys to see if you wouldn't come over and fix him up a little medicine.'

"Now, Ed Bassett was a friend of mine, and I remembered I hadn't seen him around town in several days. For all I knew, the boys were just trying to scare me, and Ed was really sick. If they were framing me, I'd get shot sooner or later, and it might just as well be on the way to the flat as in that stuffy little room. So I got up as casually as I could and put on my coat and hat.

"'Well,' I said, 'let's be off.' I left the gun on the table and looked Tom Larson pretty square in the eye. The fellows nearest the door started filin' out, when all of a sudden Tom stopped them.

"'Wait a minit, gang,' he said. 'There ain't no use in all this palaver. I don't want to string up a guy with guts enough to go out empty-handed with this bunch.' He turned to me and went on. 'We're framin' you. I reckon I oughtn't to tell you,' he said, 'but we are. But, hell, if you'd fall for a line like ours and go out

to see an ailin' friend, you're not the kind of a man I'd like to kill—'less'n I just had to.'

"It was a sort of nervous relief, of course, to know that they really intended to kill me, and I got calmer. Then Tom went on, talking straight. 'Now, see here, Buck, yo're a nice young attorney, and us boys thinks you've got a chance of a big future, maybe.' He stopped a minute, and one of the boys snickered. Then Tom went on: 'Now we wouldn't want you to do anything that might ruin yore future, you know. I reckon that's about all we got to say. Just be careful, sonny.'

"They filed out, and I dropped over on the bed. They might just as well have hung me as to have scared me to death. Well, to make a long story shorter than I might otherwise make it, Bad Bob was acquitted. But it wasn't any fault of mine. I had my dander up and back by morning, and I lit into that jury like fightin' flies. I called Bad Bob everything I could think of and threw in a lot of legal terms that he thought were worse than anything I called him. I asked for the death penalty; I defied the gang; I shouted at the top of my voice; I made the judge and the jury cry tellin' about what Shorty Grey's mother would have done and how she would have felt if she had been alive when Shorty was shot, and I described the torment of his half-sister out in California. But of course the jury was scared stiff, and they turned in a verdict of not guilty in five minutes. I should have known that there wasn't a chance, but I was just perverse enough to wade in, and I did. Of course, Bad Bob was furious, and he swore he'd get me before sundown. He probably would have, if it hadn't been for the fact that a pal of Shorty Grey's shot him full of lead before he got out of the courthouse. There was a free-for-all after that, and I guess the boys just forgot all about me in the excitement. I stayed around town and went on to Amarillo. Things weren't much better there. A fellow shot at me one night when I was dressing, but he didn't hit me. I don't know why it is," he concluded, "that I always make fellows so mad when I prosecute 'em."

"Probably because you are such a good lawyer," the engrossed chancellor commented. He regarded his companion with awe. The man had really been shot at. "How long did you stay up in that country, anyway?"

Judge Buck crossed his legs and appeared to be calculating the number of years, but the doctor felt somehow that he was stalling and that he preferred not to talk.

"Quite a while," he said at last. "I had some big cases later on. There were lots of bad men up around there. Locoed men. The country does that to you, you know."

He dwindled off as though he might be persuaded to tell more sometime, but not just yet. The doctor glanced at his watch and discovered to his amazement that it was a quarter until twelve. Hurriedly and sheepishly he got to his feet.

"I must be going," he said.

"It's early yet, Doctor. I often sit here till the small hours, just talking or thinking."

"Perhaps I can stay later again," the chancellor apologized. "But Virginia will have been expecting me back long ago. I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed the evening."

He drove home recounting to himself the experiences he had heard. Buck was a man of mystery. If he did exaggerate, he did it well and excusably. Besides, there was a lot of truth about him, and a mounting curiosity to know all about him seized the doctor. He realized suddenly and with some remorse that Buck was the first man he had known in years whom he could really look upon as a friend. The thought shamed him and then warmed him.

There was a light in Marion's room as he drove into the driveway, and from the street he had caught sight of her undressing. He glanced at his watch. It was a quarter past twelve. When he passed her room on the way to his own it was dark.

SOMETHING constructive!

The words rumbled back and forth through the doctor's mind as he reclined with profligate ease in the Morris chair of his study, chewing the rubber of a soft lead pencil and occasionally making cuneiform inscriptions on the pad in his lap. It was in that same chair that he had reached the greatest decisions of his ministerial career and hatched the greatest schemes of his educational programme. Less than three months before he had sat there and wrestled with the facts of the Warren case until heaven literally opened up and poured a solution out upon him. To-night his new dressing gown, a Christmas gift from Marion, caressed the back of his neck and gave him a feeling of royalty and intoxicating self-confidence.

Virginia was right. He must do something constructive. It had become all too clear to him that he could not do precisely what he thought he could when he came to the university. That is, he could not do it in precisely the way he thought he could. There was no point in incurring the open enmity of the whole faculty. It made life too disagreeable and uncertain. What the university now needed, he believed, was a great, broad, forward-looking constructive programme of expansion. With this the faculty would not interfere.

Something constructive!

But what?

Well, for one thing, the university ought to have more students. How many? Well, at least a thousand. That was a good round number, and he decided by a mere clutch of the pencil in his hand that he would increase the enrollment to five thousand before the university opened its doors again. Now this, of course, would call for more buildings, which in turn would call for more students, so that the constructive task of increasing the university's enrollment was capable of fascinating and endless exploitation. He must get more students so that he could get more buildings so that he could get more students. . . . The thought

whirled dizzily in his head, and half to steady himself he wrote:

Enrollment—Increase.

Now that really was much more complicated than it looked on paper. It meant a vast and far-flung enterprise, something like the capture of Jerusalem, or, to come to more modern times, something like a concerted drive along the whole front. Plans must be laid, supplies must be ordered, troops must be trained, morale must be strengthened. . . .

On the pad in his lap he scribbled:

Chancellor—General.

Looking at the words with a cocked head he added the suffix "issimo" to the word "General." The campaign must start and end under his aggressive leadership. He was the chief of staff and everything must come at his initiative; he was the Foch of the allied armies of educational reform.

Now that that was settled he could return to the task of increasing the university's enrollment. How could this be done? He tapped his lips contemplatively with the pencil and then wrote:

Org. staff.

He must have a battalion, a division, a corps of workers whose business it would be to enlist students. Why not have regular

Recruiting stations?

That was a bully idea. Have someone in each city of importance actively engaged in recruiting students. The alumni clubs which Colonel Willingham had organized would serve this purpose admirably. Each president of a local club could be regarded as a corporal in charge of enlistment; it wouldn't do to call him that, but that's what he could be, anyway. It would be his business to have patriotic meetings for his alma mater.

Minute Men.

Why couldn't some of the more famous students take the field and appear before the alumni clubs and other organizations? Sphinx Harmon and young Thomas Orr would be fine for this. They might even appear before the B. Y. P. U.'s and before Sunday-school classes.

The thought of Sunday schools suggested a capital idea to his mind, and he wrote it down hurriedly and in black letters:

Go to College Sunday.

The ministers of every denomination would be willing to

coöperate, and Martha Sumner University could be mentioned in the publicity as sponsoring the day. A letter could be sent to every minister, big and little, in three states, urging him to preach July 20th, say, on the value of a college education. And since it was commonly known by now that Dr. Dickey had restored Martha Sumner to the folds of orthodoxy, favorable reference to that school as an especially safe place for young men could be expected.

Willingham and Banks—Me.

Let the business manager and the dean cut short their vacations and spend the summer in a far-flung speaking campaign. Of course *he* must do that too; he would take the larger places and speak five or six times a day. Just like the old Methodist circuit riders. He would tour the Southwest in a flurry of determination. No town would go untouched.

As the doctor noted each item on his pad and then settled down to think about it, he marveled that none of these ideas had occurred to him before. They were great, but they were amazingly simple after one had thought of them. The whole problem fascinated him, and as his mind raced over the course he had set himself he felt a thrill of drama and grandeur he had not known since the first morning of his administration. He understood for the first time something of the character of Napoleon.

As long as possible he postponed writing a word which he set down gingerly at last:

Finances.

It was not entirely clear to him where the money came from for the various university enterprises, but it would not hurt to do some original thinking.

Budgeting Committee (Executive Com).

That was it. Let the executive committee of the board so arrange the appropriations for the next year that enough economies could be effected within the university to pay for the campaign of expansion. This would make a good impression on the executive committee and at the same time it would not work any great inconvenience on such departments as those of Science and English, from which the savings could be taken.

It was really a capital idea, and he was devilishly proud of it.

By the time he had mulled it over a bit he found himself obsessed with the joy of financing the university; it was with a fine sense of pleasure that he discovered his particular aptitude for high deeds of finance.

II

Inspired by his success thus far, he turned now to more difficult problems. After all, his real financial problem was infinitely bigger than that of raising a small fund for expansion. Where was the big money to come from?

Of a sudden he discovered that he had got very warm during his meditations, and, glad of the chance to exercise, he got up to adjust the window. From his study he could survey the present holdings of his estate. The campus of Martha Sumner lay draped in the first and last futile snow of the season. In the grandeur of the night it looked more magnificent than he had ever seen it look before. It seemed intensely real to him, and he could almost feel the cool touch of smooth stone underneath his hand. Even as he looked the buildings multiplied miraculously, and he beheld an enormous campus with properties of exceeding splendor under the silver blanket of the moonlight.

How long he stood entranced before the vision he did not know. Everything had become blindingly clear to him. It was as though one interminable flash of lightning had illumined the scene for a hundred years to come. Over and beyond the tower of Martha Sumner Hall he saw another and more stately edifice, as real to him as the dormitory by its side. Out to the right behind the gymnasium there was a stadium like a temple. The whole place was full of tall, impressive towers as far as the eye could see. . . .

As though he dared not look longer upon a scene so intimate and holy, he blinked and let the vision vanish. Seating himself once more, he took up his pencil and laid the pad almost tenderly on his lap. It seemed prosaic and earthly now to sketch on a pad, and, besides, there was something strangely, enticingly familiar about the revelation he had been vouchsafed from his study window. Desperately his memory clutched at shreds of pictures which dangled in his mind. There was something involved more important than mere recollection: What he had seen and what he

was trying to recall were things poignantly real and significant. At last, in a grimace of pain and effort, he had it. What he remembered was the campus of the University of Chicago as he had seen it wrapped in snow on his return from the trenches. And what he was thinking, he knew now, was that the great campus he had seen from his window had been ordained of God for him to build. He had been given to build for the South what Harper had built for the North—with due allowances made, of course, for the kind of theology to be taught.

On his pad he wrote cryptically:

U of Ch model.

His writing was intentionally light and illegible. It would not do to let even himself think that he was merely imitating. He wasn't. But he was going to do for the great section of his birth what Harper had done for the North and Middle West. That is, if he could find his Rockefeller. There was no doubt about it. The university, Martha Sumner University, must have a *Rockefeller*.

There were, of course, other chances of gaining financial support in a big way. Oil City was one of the richest towns in the South, and he wrote with some pride:

Wealthy alumni and patrons.

He must persuade the citizens to make large donations. They would do it. He would appeal to them to build for eternity against the mad waves of radicalism that threatened to engulf the land. He could appeal to them on the basis of

Patriotism. Civic Pride. Love of children. Love of fellow man. Perpetuate names.

He would play upon every human motive like a skilled organist until he had wrought a lasting symphony in mortar and stone.

Yet, when all was said and done, as it would be, there would still remain the need of some reliable benefactor, some philanthropic millionaire, in short, a Rockefeller, upon whose endless means the future could draw without stint or limit. There were educational foundations, to be sure, but they were hard to wheedle, and a magnificent university could not be built upon a paltry million garnered here and there, coming in uncertainly and irregularly. There must be somewhere a man of endless resources who would become literally immersed in the great enter-

prise, as keenly anxious for its success as the chancellor. But who was it to be?

He tapped his pad impatiently and ran his hand helplessly across his brow. If such men existed they were, like Rockefeller, already committed. Coldly and yet with a certain amount of burning eagerness, he ran his mind's eye down the list of prospects, noting the objections to each:

Grant of Grant & Grant. Small fry. Worth five million at best.

Simeon Hawk. Important as an organizer but wealth too insignificant for a great undertaking.

Sol Isaacs. A Jew.

All of these men would help. They would give schools or stadiums or a million now and then, but no single one of them was big enough for the need the doctor faced. Obviously the one man in the community with the first qualification of wealth was old man Arthur King, but he was out of the question. He was out of the question. Or was he?

If so, why was he? The doctor meditated daringly for a moment, his eyes wide at his own audacity. Arthur King, the old miser who lived in his huge mansion all alone and said that all preachers ought to be hanged and that all professors ought to have their throats cut; Arthur King, the misanthrope, might become the university's philanthropist. It was fantastic to imagine such a thing, but the possibility held the doctor's mind like a tale of horror.

For one thing, he certainly had the money. No one knew the precise figure of his wealth, but everyone put it in the neighborhood of thirty millions. There was a town named for him in the heart of the Continental field, and it was said on good authority that Arthur King owned half of the business buildings in Oil City, either directly or indirectly. Undoubtedly he had the wealth, but his spirit was very weak. Dr. Dickey recalled a conversation he had overheard one night when he had gone with Colonel Willingham to one of the country clubs in the vicinity. Three men of evident wealth and comfort were sitting around the fire at one end of the huge reception room, and while the colonel jabbered about football the doctor had picked up their talk:

"Now, I'll tell you the guy down here that they know best up in the New York financial world. Do you think it's old man Grant? Say, he isn't known at all. It's King. That's the name to conjure with. Nobody down here knows how important that fellow is."

"Yeah," contributed another of the trio, "I remember the last time I was up there it was that way."

"Well, it still is," said the first. "I just got back and that's the man they know. You just say King and they prick up their ears."

"He's a crabby old devil, though," complained the third. "I'll bet that guy never gave a dollar to anything."

"That's the way he got it," said the first, and the second nodded his head sagely.

The doctor had heard no more just then, but there had been other strange rumors about Arthur King; they came to him in whiffs and never brought more than a suggestion of mystery. Everyone must be afraid of the old duffer. Well, he wasn't. Surely something could be done.

Tossing away his pencil, the chancellor got up. He consulted his old-fashioned watch, winding it instinctively, and discovered that he had been concentrating for more than an hour. Stretching tentatively, he found to his great satisfaction that his legs and arms were stiff and that he was very weary.

III

What happened in the days following the doctor's séance with himself was nothing short of miraculous. There prevails in certain circles of the clergy a belief that the religious act of tithing one's income will be followed inevitably by prosperity. No end of stories are available to support the theory, and most of these Dr. Dickey had heard and partly believed. So it was that he interpreted the blessings of the next few months as the direct benediction of God on his constructive programme. He was, to himself at least, a new man. Fear had vanished, and he was giddy for the first time with the joy of being chancellor.

His campaign lay out before him with all the detail and beauty of a landscape, and he lost no time in confiding his ambitions piecemeal to Colonel Willingham and Mr. Hawk. Their

enthusiasm was boundless; the colonel gladly accepted the commission to become major general in charge of recruiting students for the fall, and Mr. Hawk, after hemming and hawing as becomes a shrewd business man, consented to make at once the initial donation toward a project he had long contemplated in secret—with the result that the *Oil City News* carried one April morning the headlines:

HAWK SCHOOL OF
COMMERCE ADDED
TO MARTHA SUMNER

COURSES IN REAL ESTATE AND
SALESMANSHIP WILL BE OFFERED

NAMED IN HONOR OF DONOR

NEW BRANCH WILL BEAR NAME OF
LONG TIME BENEFACTOR
AND SUPPORTER

It was Mr. Hawk's passion for commerce which gave the doctor the cue for a long dialogue that spring with various minor millionaires of the state; until he could drag Arthur King on the stage, he might just as well amuse himself with the supernumeraries. Through the friendly offices of Colonel Willingham he learned that Albert Hoffmyer, a retired merchant who lived with his spinster daughter at Tulsa, was a fiend on the subject of patriotism. He was notoriously a member of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, but his support was financial rather than oratorical, and the doctor saw no harm in writing Mr. Hoffmyer to suggest what a splendid thing it would be if someone would only found a school of patriotism where young men and women could be trained for righteous citizenship. Mr. Hoffmyer took enthusiastically to the idea, and came down to talk it over. He turned out to be a pest, but when the doctor finally sent him back to Tulsa there were plans on foot for the Hoffmyer School of Citizenship.

It all got to be as easy as taking money away from blind beggars. One Sunday in San Antonio he was speaking to a large

congregation of eager faces on the miracle of Jesus curing the blind man with clay and spittle. That of course suggested that, instead of Christian Science, we ought to fulfill the mission of Jesus to-day by means of Christian doctors. Then, waving his arms and clasping them across his breast, he pointed his finger at the audience and said :

"I am amazed and depressed when I reflect upon the fact that with one of the greatest institutions of learning serving one of the greatest churches in America, we do not have at Martha Sumner a School of Medicine. It is a most depressing thought." Then, smashing the large Bible on the pulpit before him, he took on the attitude of a stern warrior for God and continued : "Let me say here and now that I consecrate myself to that as one of the most important features of our programme in years to come. Oh, would to God that some man, some good and generous man or woman would lay upon the altar of Christ the money necessary to this great enterprise. How the land would rejoice ! How the angels in heaven would sing at such a gift !"

And though the angels were quiet for a spell the morning papers announced :

MARTHA SUMNER TO HAVE MEDIC SCHOOL

and at the rather well-to-do home where the doctor went that day for dinner he found the father of the family very enthusiastic. That gentleman told Dr. Dickey he thought it a shame that the young men of Baptist homes were compelled to study medicine in a Methodist institution or in the godless atmosphere of the state university. To which the doctor readily agreed, and he found himself engrossed in a new and capital project he had really not thought of before.

IV

It was the same spring, too, when the chancellor announced the appointment of Dr. Percy Swanson as Counsellor of Men and Director of Vocational Guidance. Dr. Swanson was pastor of the church in Okmulgee that counted among its members one of

the richest women in the state, Grandma Effie Graham. Effie had at her disposal a large fortune left her by a worthless husband, and she was considering, so the rumors ran, the problem of how best to serve humanity with it. It was well known that she was a trustful old soul—just a bit “off,” in fact, as a result of the hard life she had led with her husband. He had chased chorines, even in his old age, and had spent the greater part of each year in New York. Effie’s mind was affected, it was said, by his immoralities. But whatever he did to her while he lived, he covered it partly in his death by leaving her his entire fortune made in oil, thereby disappointing two daughters and their husbands. He made his will in the remorse of his last days. His money had been secured from widows and orphans in high speculation, but now that it was in the hands of a good Christian woman, the prelates of the state decided that it was not too tainted to be put to some good use. Accordingly, exponents of every worthy cause put the widow of Dave Graham on their list of active prospects.

The doctor had written to the Reverend Percy Swanson, of course, that he had an open date on April 20th and would be available at the morning hour. The pastor had replied in a tone which did not seem any too cordial, but had invited the chancellor to come down. He found Swanson a young and vigorous man who insisted upon talking about education and would give out nothing about the likes and dislikes of Effie Graham. The doctor preached at random that morning, bringing his discourse to a close with a tirade upon the younger generation. At the close of the service Effie Graham came forward and, taking his hand in both of hers, said:

“Brother Dickey, I want you to know that was a message sent from Almighty God. I wish more of our preachers would talk about the awful sin to-day. You preach just like Brother Swanson, but it don’t seem to do no good and I don’t think most preachers are doing it.”

There were tears in her eyes and the chancellor was gravely ashamed of himself for feeling so pleased over his kill. He had no definite plan at the moment, but on the train that night he worked out a scheme which made him feel positively girlish with delight. It would take months to execute it, but he knew the first step.

For a long while he had imagined that the university needed a Counsellor of Men and Director of Vocational Guidance. At present Dr. Sedberry, one of the most contemptible members of the opposition, lived in one of the dormitories and pretended to supervise the work of the men students. But the arrangement was hardly satisfactory. Besides, Sedberry was a dangerous man. Why wouldn't it be a good idea to appoint Percy Swanson to the new position?

He consulted Hawk the next morning and before noon had written Swanson as follows:

I could not help but be impressed during my brief stay in your church with the fine grip you have on the young life of your community. I congratulate you on it.

Would it not be possible to persuade you to join the staff of Martha Sumner University as Counselor of Men and Director of Vocational Guidance? I have not yet had time to consult the Board of Trustees with reference to remuneration, but I believe you could be assured of a salary of \$6,000 a year with great hope of promotion with the growth of the university.

You may be sure that I will await your reply with eagerness. I am sure your transfer can be arranged.

Sincerely,

HORACE ETHELMORE DICKEY,
Chancellor of the University.

Swanson wrote back with a good deal of enthusiasm, and the appointment was announced. It remained now only to sell the scheme to the board, for their failure to approve might be very embarrassing. But if everything went over, the first step of the doctor's plan to appropriate the fortune of Effie Graham for the cause of education would have succeeded admirably.

WHAT'S all this I hear about a new coach?"

Sphinx, clad luxuriously in a clean shirt, lay sunning himself like an alligator on the grassy banks of a trivial brook that ran through the campus. He and Tommy Orr had withdrawn themselves several yards from the haunts of man and were communing with nature. Sphinx's hairy arms cushioned his head, and he raised up every so often to spit accurately at a neighboring rock.

"It's straight," Tommy replied, digging at the tufts of grass in front of him with a small stick he had found. "At least, I reckon it is. I got it from Doc Leveridge yesidy. Guess Willy'll tell you, though, soon as it's absolutely official."

"What's all the big idea, I wonder," Sphinx mused.

"Big idea? Say, do ya know who they're getting?"

"Naw. Who?"

"Smilin' Syd Huddleston."

"Who?"

"*Smilin' Syd Huddleston.*"

"Yeah? Who's he?"

Tommy stopped his digging and looked at his brawny friend disdainfully. "Goddam, you shore are ignorant. Why, that guy coached the Golden Tornado over at Georgia Tech. He's the one that put 'em on the map."

"Well, I don't see that that's anything special," Sphinx retorted placidly. "Old Bud Wilson's good enough for me."

"Lissen, boy, this school ain't beat Tate since Bud Wilson's been coaching here. Willy and all the rest are fed up with him. Besides, man, think what it means to work under the best coach in the country."

Sphinx turned his head and spat at the rock. Then he shifted his chew from one jaw to the other.

"I don't see as it makes much of a difference," he calculated. "Got to work your guts out any way you take it. It's all a lotta hooley. Do you really have any fun at it, Tom?"

"Fun? Why it's the greatest game in the world."

"Ah, cripes. You sound like a chapel talk. I mean really. What's the fun of gettin' out there every day and bustin' your back for nuthin'?"

Tommy threw his stick away disgustedly. "Damn if you're not the laziest cuss I ever saw."

"It's a big man's privilege," Sphinx grinned. "I don't mind workin' or fightin' or even playin' if it's necessary or if I'm a mind to. But it's this business of trainin' like a buck private that gets me. Workin' out, and all that sort of tripe. And havin' to pass a whole mess of courses, eco and all those things. It ain't worth it. Then you get out and run your head in the ground whether you feel like it or not just so a bunch of slimy little underfed freshmen and a bunch of fat millionaires can holler. It ain't worth it, I tell you."

He spat again, this time beyond the rock. "Tommy," he resumed, "did you go to a carnival when you were a kid?"

"Sure, I been since. What's that got to do with it?"

"Did you ever see a guy git in a cage with the lions?"

"Yeah. Go on."

"Well, I did. And I always used to wonder what the lions thought of it. That allus used to worry me when I was a kid. Hell, they hadn't done nuthin' but get caught; they happened to be lions, and they happened to get caught. Yet they had to get out there and perform for a bunch of goddam bankers. I allus felt sorry for 'em."

Tommy crossed his legs energetically. "Damn if you're not gettin' tender-hearted, Sphinx. I don't see as you got any right to complain. Ain't you gettin' enough?"

"Sure. If I wasn't I'd strike for a raise. But I shore earn every cent I get. I don't get as much as old man Hawk, and I work a helluva lot harder. I bet I don't get as much as Willy, and what's he do?"

"He's done a lot for this school," Tommy protested indignantly. "If it wasn't for him you wouldn't be here."

"Yeah, I reckon that's so," Sphinx replied wearily. "And you wouldn't either. I wonder where we'd be," he asked himself wistfully.

"I'd probably 'a' been with Vanderbilt or maybe Yale—you can't tell."

"You with Yale! Ho! ho!" Sphinx placed his huge hand in Tommy's face and shoved him gently. "It'd be a pleasure to me, personally, Mr. Orr, to catch you with Yale." Tommy pushed the hand away from his face and, quick as a squirrel, he was astride the mighty Sphinx.

"You would, uh? Now just what would you do about it?"

Sphinx wound his legs around the smaller lad's neck and pulled him backwards. "Holler calf rope," he commanded. Tommy struggled awhile and then said plaintively, "Calf rope."

He resumed his former position and picked up his stick. "Say," he went on, "I found out somethin' else from Doc Leveridge. We're gonna haf to teach next year."

"Teach?" Sphinx sat up and stared at him incredulously. "Now, lissen, boy, I'll hang around here and try to make my grades, but I'm damned if I'm gonna teach."

"Yes, you are," Tommy warned him. "It'll be easy, though."

Sphinx lay back on his elbows and spat through his teeth like a justice of the peace. "You're full of bull," he glowered, "if you think I'm gonna teach. *Teach!* Where'd you get all this dirt?"

"Doc told me."

"What's he know about it?"

"Well, it's a sort of a frame-up, you see," Tommy explained, gesturing laconically with his hands and instinctively lowering his voice. "Willy put it over, and it ain't official yet. But here's what it is: They've started a new department or something—I forget what they call it. Anyway, they're gonna get a swell coach like Smilin' Syd to come and make on like he was teaching, and all that. They'll pay him enough to pry him loose from where he is. And," he concluded with a sly wink, "they'll pay you and me to teach the babes and sucklings physical ed."

"Like hell they will! Jeeze, ain't it enough when a man gets out and works his head off without havin' to teach the babes and sucklin's? What da they think we are—Greek goddesses or somethin'?"

"Ah, it won't be so bad, Sphinx," Tommy consoled him. "We gotta keep up appearances, you know."

"I haven't," Sphinx retorted. He seemed inconsolable. "All right. Professor Orr, will you take the girls out for a little swim?" he said mockingly.

"You first, Professor Harmon. You're the whale with the ladies."

Sphinx jabbed at him and Tommy turned his head toward the road which crossed the brook a few rods distant. A car had stopped, and a girl was getting out and coming toward them.

"There's your mamma, Sphinx," Tommy warned him.

"Oh, hell," Sphinx wailed, tossing his cud of tobacco over his shoulder and spitting intermittently at the rock. "I wonder what she wants this time of day."

Tommy watched Marion as she approached them, walking with a swish that was noticeable even from the front.

"Some baby—that!" he appraised. "Lookit that strut. If I had her legs I'd sit and look down at 'em all day."

"Like Boody or whatever that guy's name is," Sphinx put in classically.

"I guess so. That's where we get our word boodle, ain't it? Say, boy, if you don't——"

"Get your mind out of the gutter, kid. That woman's virtuous as your aunt Minerva."

"I wouldn't let my aunt Minerva go out with you," Tommy soliloquized. Marion was too nearly upon them for further comment, and Sphinx raised himself to a sitting posture, calling out a solemn "Hello."

"Hi, fellers," Marion answered. "What you doing?"

"Studyin'," Tommy retorted.

"Now, Thomas," she chided.

"We are. We're studyin' nature in all her grandeur. Anyway, don't call me Thomas. I might get mad and pull that pretty red sweater off and wrap it around your neck and choke you with it."

She shuddered and sat down, placing her legs out before her, and then, apparently thinking better of it, pulling them around to the side of her. "You wouldn't let him do all that, would you, Sphinx?"

"It'd be a pleasure to see him try. The little pie-eyed shrimp."

"Say, bo, what's the matter with you to-day? You ought to hear all the stuff he's been spoutin' around here. About hatin' football and that sort of tripe. He talks like an old maid with the cramps."

"Don't pay any attention to him, Thos," Marion admonished. "He gets that way ever so often. He just needs a little petting."

Tommy rolled over on the grass, but Sphinx ignored her words. "Does your papa know you're out, little girl?" he asked.

"Don't get sarcastic," she countered. "Papa'd have no fears if he knew I was out with a big, strong boy like you."

"But you ain't."

"I will be soon."

"Well, I reckon I'll be going," Tommy remarked, getting up on his haunches.

"Don't be silly," Marion said, shoving him back. "Stick around. I'll need you to protect me against this cave man."

"He's harmless, madam," Tommy replied, getting up again, this time out of her reach. "We have to feed him on raw meat to keep him alive. He wouldn't harm a chambermaid."

"Don't go, Tom," Sphinx begged.

"Yeah, I'll haf to. I got a lot of chemistry and calculus and eco and geology to get up."

"God loveth a cheerful liar," Marion blasphemed and blushed slightly as she did.

"I'll be on over in a little while," Sphinx shouted after him. "If you have any trouble, save it for me."

"Mebbe," Tom shouted back. "I'll sit up for you, son." To Marion he called, "Good-bye, canned heat," and was off on his stumpy legs toward the dormitory.

"He's a funny little cuss, ain't he?" Sphinx remarked as he watched Tommy cross the road, stopping like a small boy to kick the tires on Marion's car.

"You acted as though you really didn't want him to go," Marion pouted.

"Well, I didn't."

"Then you didn't want to see me?"

"I don't mind that at all, miss. But I don't reckon we'd do anything that'd shock Tommy, would we?"

She ignored his question and gazed dreamily up the meadow-like roll of the campus toward Martha Sumner Hall. "I wanted to see you alone. Where have you been lately?"

"Me? Oh, I've been studyin', Marion. Honest, I have."

"Astronomy, I'll bet. Anybody been tutoring you?"

"Just a couple of freshmen. That's all."

"Yeah, hello freshmen!" She bit a tender blade of grass as though she were biting a tenpenny nail and looked at him accusingly.

"Ah, come on, Marion. Don't jump on me. I haven't done anything. Honest injun." Sphinx's tone was that of a tormented parrot. He pleaded with his eyes and then turned away and sighed heavily. "Jeeze, I wish I was a shepherd or something. Wouldn't it be fun to be a little shepherd in the hills and sit out in the sun all day long."

"And write psalms, I suppose."

"I might. But just think. Nothin' to do but just sit there and watch the sheep."

"Somebody would fall in love with you."

"Oh, I donno. Maybe not. Nobody would ever get a chance. I'd just sit and tend to the sheep. That would sure be the life, you know."

They were silent for a moment, then Marion resumed:

"I wonder if you could get up enough energy to take a little ride."

Sphinx looked sleepily at the car and measured the distance deliberately with his eye. "Couldn't you drive it over here?"

"I'll swear! You're the laziest mortal I ever saw." She was on her feet, brushing her skirt vigorously. "Get up," she commanded. "I'm going to take you riding if I have to trail you."

He rolled over on his all-fours and got up in the manner of a cow. "At your service, miss. It'd be a pleasure to go for a ride with you, and I don't mean maybe." Together they walked to the car, Sphinx towering over her like some prehistoric conqueror bringing home a new concubine.

II

When, toward the middle of August, the Mavericks went into training, it was with unprecedented ado. A scenic spot was chosen on the shores of Lake Shubert in a neighboring town and appropriate advertisement was made of the fact. All expenses were to be defrayed by the university, and when Coach Huddleston counted his charges on the first day of the camp he found that he

had not less than one hundred and fifty prospects. These were quickly cut to one hundred, of which only fifty were eligible for the coming season, but Frankie Leach was assigned the job of whipping into shape a freshman team that would maul anything in the country. A good coach must build for the future.

The camp attracted to its borders a crowd of sports writers who could make news out of anything that happened. If Sphinx got away for a forty-yard run through the line in scrimmage, that was news. If he missed gaining for as many as three times, that was news. Sphinx never lost one sparkle of his radiance. There were pictures in the papers of his legs from the front and pictures of his legs from behind. There were interviews with him on what he thought the chances were of beating Tate and interviews with the coach on what he thought of Sphinx.

The headlines ran:

TERRIBLE TUT FINDS FORM RETURNING

Or

INSCRUTABLE SPHINX IS JINX OF MAVERICK
RIVALS

Or

HUDDLESTON CALLS SPHINX SOUTH'S GREATEST
PLAYER

Or

SPHINX RIPS LINE IN DAILY SCRIMMAGE

It was estimated that at least five young men earned enough to carry them through the first term writing about the spectacle of the training Mavericks. Not even the diet escaped the attention of these scriveners. One young man conducted a column, which, after a great deal of thought, he called "Day by Day with the Man-eating Mavericks." He began the column with a discourse on diet as follows:

Some of my readers may suppose that the fighting Mavericks now in training on the scenic shores of Lake Shubert eat noth-

ing but men. Nothing could be further from the truth. They do, of course, have their fill of human flesh, but they are not entirely cannibalistic.

In fact the diet which is prepared daily by Doc Leveridge, wily trainer and at present dietitian of the crew, is the product of a great deal of thought. The trainer recognizes the importance of proper eating. For breakfast . . .

Then followed a column in which the calories were added up and the amount of vitamins shrewdly calculated.

Nothing was overlooked. There were of course spectacular accounts of the scrimmages, filled with such phrases as "throttled him in his steps," "cut down the interference like a sickle," "ground his bones into the earth," "picked his hole like a scared rat," "plowed relentlessly on like a tank." There were pictures of linemen charging, of backfield men plunging, of passers hurling, of kickers stretched and contorted after powerful punts. And every hometown paper carried a special story which left the impression that without the talent of that particular lad from Centerville or Kaufman, the chances of the Mavericks for the coming season would be dark indeed.

In the city the throngs devoured every item. Clubmen read the stirring stories aloud to other clubmen cornered in lounge rooms. High-school boys bought papers and turned feverishly to the sport pages. Serious young clerks and bookkeepers rushed onto street cars, grabbed a strap nervously, and glued their attention to the exciting bits from Camp Shubert. Everywhere there was talk and turmoil. The public could not wait for the season to begin. And five days before the season opened the bets were reaching odds that Smilin' Syd Huddleston's Man-eatin' Mavericks would this year beat the loathed and despised team from Tate. And when the touted team sprang into action in the first game of the season, the inadequate stands were filled to capacity, despite the fact that the opponents were a bunch of school teachers from a near-by normal. It was enough to see so great a team in action. The result was all the public paid to see. The Mavericks stampeded, and nothing could stand in their way. They bellowed up and down the field for more than an hour, never stopping for a moment, even when substitutes were thrown in to

give the lighter team a chance. In the end they had piled up 87 points and at least a ton of prestige.

Then the next week they trounced an outlaw school, publicly known to hire ringers, by a score of 48 to 0, and the predictions of the sport prophets began to be filled to the overflowing. Odds climbed a bit higher as Tate amassed only 30 points against a weaker team, and the state of mind of the populace approached hysteria. There were editorials demanding a decent stadium for the seating of the public. Then a local paper fanned the flames a bit more by carrying an interview with the coach from Tate who said that he would lick the Mavericks with his second string. "They're a newspaper club," he scowled. "A bunch of moving-picture stars. Just wait until Thanksgiving." And five thousand alumni and five thousand undergraduates swore they'd make him eat his lousy statement.

TWENTY

Phi Delta Theta announces the pledging of Theodore King of Webster Groves, Mo., nephew of the well-known Arthur King of Oil City. Young King was formerly a student of Kemper Military Academy.

This item, circled with a red pencil mark, the doctor read in a folded copy of the *Lasso* which Colonel Willingham dropped on his desk at the opening of the fall term. For a moment he regarded it stupidly but with a very profound look on his face, wanting to think a great many things and not quite daring to.

The chancellor was just back from an incessantly busy summer, and upon his return he found the atmosphere of the university in a constant state of tension; it was as though some inflammable gas hung steadily over the buildings and awaited only the striking of a match to set it off. Everywhere strange and eerie excitement prevailed. His campaign for enrollment had been gorgeously successful. More than twelve hundred freshmen roamed the campus like cornered coyotes; queues of students formed and stood patiently into the night matriculating; the dormitories emptied over into neighboring houses, and it was necessary to issue a ukase asking people in the city to open their homes to the eager young men and women seeking education. The doctor lost no time in letting the constituency know that the increase represented a thirst and quest for truth which it was the bounden duty of the university to supply. Facilities were obviously, deplorably inadequate, and unless the alumni rallied at once to the cry for new buildings, it would be necessary to turn literally hundreds of yearning young citizens away from a school designed to mold men for citizenship and service.

Shacks sprang up overnight and were photographed and sent to the newspapers. A staff of teachers was recruited to handle the classes in freshman English and other required courses. The new schools fared admirably: the Hawk School of Commerce, which had been actually launched only in the middle of the summer, played to a full house, and it was at the happy suggestion of its new dean, a local real estate salesman, that

courses in journalism and some of the courses in freshman English were transferred within its bailiwick. The whole programme of the doctor was decisively vindicated; the people had spoken, and their speech had been one colossal hurrah.

Chancellor Dickey surveyed the kill with gleaming chops. Without stint or reserve he had given himself to the Cause, and God had richly rewarded his efforts. Three, four, sometimes five times a day he had spoken—before women's clubs, women's missionary societies, luncheon clubs, Rotary Clubs, Men's Bible Classes, Women's Bible Classes, Young People's Societies, morning services, evening services, special afternoon services. Where two or three had been gathered together, he was there, always bearing in upon them the light of education, the value of the trained and consecrated Christian mind, the danger of a nation drunk on knowledge without the sobering influence of spiritual truth. Into the homes of the rich he had gone like a lord, carrying the message of truth in suave and cultured utterance, talking education over teacups to old women in invalids' chairs and to strong and hairy men in the mahogany environs of efficient office. He had put over a tremendous victory.

His life during the first two months of the term was an endless conference. There was the Committee on Appropriations, for example, which he had appointed to distribute equitably the blanket tax which Colonel Willingham had ingeniously suggested assessing the students. This tax was supposed to produce at \$15 a head enough money to carry on all the many student enterprises, but by the time \$8.50 of it was directed to football there was hardly enough left to go round without some adjustments here and there. The Band had to have new uniforms, and the Y. M. C. A. and the staff of the *Lasso* had thus to be pampered with promises. . . .

Other difficulties showed themselves, too. Some of the professors were raising an unreasonable howl over the transfer of various courses to the new schools, and all of these little differences had to be properly ironed out.

II

There was really no end to it all, and not until the night before the big game with Tate did the doctor find it possible to call

upon his friend, Stephen Buck. Rather apologetically, he rang the judge on the 'phone.

"Stephen?"

"Yes."

"This is Dickey."

"Oh-ho." There was a vibrant note of cordiality in the recognition. "Where on earth have you been, my dear fellow?"

"I've been as busy as the forces of evil," Dr. Dickey replied, blushing slightly. "What's the chance of seeing you for a while if I run over this evening?"

"Every chance in the world, man. I've nothing important to do. When will you come?"

"That's uncertain. I've got to deliver a convocation address or something like it at pep meeting, but I'll run right on over as soon as I'm through."

"Fair enough. I'll expect you, then."

The doctor's convocation address was part of the colossal programme planned by the witches of school spirit to brew victory on the morrow. It was the last of a series of wild, hysterical gatherings that had been held that year—gatherings which had come to be as much a part of student life as examinations and the actual games. It was barely after seven when Marion rapped insistently on the door of his study.

"Well?" he called.

She opened the door and came in. "Are you ready, Dad?" Her voice trembled with excitement, and her face was as eager as a child's on Christmas morning.

"Is it time?" he asked deliberately.

"Oh, yes. It's late. Come on; Betty Lou and I are going to take you over."

"I'll want the car afterwards. Can you manage to get home somehow?"

"You'd be surprised, Dad," she said, tweaking his ear, "how well we can manage. Now, let's go."

She seemed actually impatient, and with a farewell look at his massive brow in the mirror and a desperate conjecture on what he should say to the assembled enthusiasts, he went downstairs. From the street Marion honked playfully and he rushed out, finding suddenly that he too was in a hurry.

"You know Betty Lou, don't you, Dad?" Marion asked him as she released the clutch and catapulted the chancellor uncereemoniously onto the back cushions.

"Oh, yes," he said amiably. And after he had adjusted his hat and spectacles, he went on, "How are your father and mother?"

"They're swell, thanks," Betty Lou answered, and to Marion suggested, "Say, how'd you like to go by and get Sue?"

Marion agreed, with a lunge at the steering wheel before she spoke: "That's an idea." The car had turned half over in her sudden decision.

"Daughter," the doctor called plaintively from the back seat, "you mustn't drive so recklessly."

Betty Lou giggled and nudged her chum, but Marion said, "All right, Dad, I'll be more careful." In less than two minutes they had covered the half mile to Sue's house and stood honking for dear life in front of her door. The doctor shifted about uncomfortably in the back and was on the verge of telling Marion to run in and see if Sue was there when Sue appeared.

"Come on, let's go," Betty Lou invited. Sue ran down the steps from the house to the car.

"Where you all going?" she asked.

"To pep meeting, silly," Betty Lou replied.

Sue looked suspiciously at the doctor. "You know Dad, don't you?" Marion helped. "Come on, get in." Sue nodded to the chancellor and crawled in the front seat with the girls.

"Oh, gee, I never was so ex-cited!" Betty Lou exclaimed, holding her arms aloft and thrilling as they swung once more down the Boulevard. "It's just like being drunk." Sue nudged her, and she amended, "Like pictures of being drunk."

As they neared the drive which led through the campus, Marion ground her brakes and slid the big car to a standstill. "There's some girls from the house," she explained, backing up to hail her sorority sisters. In a moment the doctor found himself surrounded with a scrambling, cheering crowd of girls who scampered all over the back seat.

"Now we're havin' real fun," one of them said, and none of them paid the slightest attention to the chancellor.

"You betcha," another agreed.

"Trample Tate!" another shouted as they passed a crowd nearer the gym.

"Whoopee!" Betty Lou's voice bellowed above the rest.

At the door the girls left him, taking their places in the crowd of chattering enthusiasts which had already begun to fill the gym. Marion pressed his arm.

"Thanks for the buggy ride, Dad," she said. "Now, you be careful and don't stay out too late."

"I can drive you home afterwards," the doctor suggested.

"Oh, no," she objected generously. "I'll get home easily. Don't you worry about me."

With that she was gone, and the doctor turned awkwardly to find someone he knew. He half started to follow Marion, but halted instinctively. Colonel Willingham and Doc Leveridge were chatting together at one end of the court, and Sphinx, who waved to someone in the stands, was loitering near by.

"I was just telling Doc this was the best turn-out we've had in years," Willingham said, and with his habit of indicating the obvious he waved his hand at the students fast nestling into their places.

"Ah, it's great," the doctor said, but he discovered that he could hardly hear himself; somewhat louder he said, "It's great."

There were whistles and catcalls and high, squawking noises as the orchestra of the higher learning tuned its pieces for the concert. Several fellows who knew that their talent would be lost in the organized hysteria later on let loose terrifying screeches at regular intervals—long, quivering Indian yells—and as they shattered the atmosphere already dense with tobacco smoke, a ripple of savage excitement ran through the crowd like a corporate tremble.

The redoubtable Sphinx, sighting a person he wanted to see, walked halfway down in front of the stand and crawled over the banister. This was the signal for a huzzah and a bellow of applause. He grinned, vaulted up the steps by placing his hands on the seats on either side of the aisle, and sat down self-consciously. The doctor, who had watched the performance with some curiosity and envy, noted that Sphinx had gone to

Marion; emotion knocked at the chancellor's heart—an emotion which carried a weird commingling of pride and jealousy.

The crowd now was working itself up into a state of divine madness. It was alive, charged with a powerful current of vitality; it had pep. The cheer leaders were grooming themselves and holding little conferences here and there. One broke off from the main group and went through brief acrobatics; then he walked back, explaining to the others. It was John Tippy, the chief witch doctor of the Maverick tribe. He was a lad with protruding jaw and glasses; there was a wild, maniacal glint in his eye, made all the more grotesque by the crop of red beard that stuck to his face. Johnny had sworn in September that he would not shave until the Mavericks had beaten Tate. Someone in the stands started to chant "Johnny gets a shave, gets a shave," and delightedly the crowd took it up. Johnny smiled but he did not relax. There was murder in his eye.

Suddenly there was a deafening roar—louder, fuller, deeper than the aggregate noise of the assembled scholars; it was the growl, the bellow, the angry and gleeful snarl of the soul of the crowd. And no wonder! Turning, the doctor saw marching through the door at one end of the court the Martha Sumner Band in full parade uniform. Out in front, his style cramped slightly by the low sill of the door, walked the leader like a Romanoff general. Behind, their faces contorted and swollen from puffing into their instruments, walked the members of the band, blasting earth and sky with the strains of the plangent declaration, "Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here!"

The cheer leaders dashed to their posts and cavorted like medicine men, jumping up and down and haranguing the crowd with gibbering incantations. But the crowd now paid no attention to its chosen priests; the spectacle of color on the court held it fascinated. Behind the band came the Maverick Club, a corps of pep cells around which the whole system of that curious brand of excitement known as school spirit had been built. They were dressed in Mexican costume, with high sombreros and chaps and shirts in the colors of the school. Each smoked a brown, tapering cigarette and walked with callous indifference. They were known to be the peppiest men in the university and need not display their wares until the leaders called for them.

The din that filled the building split the doctor's ears until, partly to participate in undergraduate life and partly to support his own eardrums against the assault of noise, he lifted his voice timidly in the reverberating hullabaloo. Down the court toward him the band marched, playing for dear life yet making little recognizable sound above the terrible racket that rocked the building.

At a given signal the band halted, stopped its cacophonous serenade, and after an impressive silence of thirty seconds—a silence achieved only by the exhortations of the yell leaders and the strong hand of tradition—they struck the first note of "Dear Old Martha Sumner U." Every head was bared; every eye was fixed steadily to the front; every heart beat a little faster; and as the melody warmed up to a spirited if melancholy climax, five thousand students swore eternal vengeance upon the lice from Tate. . . .

III

The doctor's speech came toward the close of the performance. Sphinx preceded him, as did Smilin' Syd and Cap'n Fullingim of the class of '13. All of these men shook the gymnasium with their eloquence, though the doctor could not see just what it was in their speeches that stirred the multitude to such depths. Sphinx was very much embarrassed.

"You-all know I'm not much on speech-makin'," he said when he had been dragged from the stands by four burly men commissioned for the job. He had stood grinning very self-consciously until the ovation died down.

"You-all know I'm not much on speech-makin'," he began. One or two hurrahs greeted this statement, but they were quickly silenced. This was no time for foolishness. "All I got to say is that we're goin' out there to-morrow to *win*."

As though the word had touched a cap of dynamite, a terrible detonation fired in salute and did not pass into echo until Sphinx held up his hand for silence. "As we all know, Tate has got a strong team. But we've got a stronger one."

"Ya-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a. Hur-rah-ah-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h!"

"Atta boy, Sphinx!"

"We're gonna make that Tate coach eat his words."

"Ya-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a. Hur-rah-ah-h-h-h-h-h-h-h-h!"

"We're gonna make 'im eat 'em raw," he repeated, evidently excited at his own power of speech. "An' if there's any of you in this here crowd or in this school, I don't keer who he is, that thinks we're not gonna beat Tate to-morrow when all is said and done and when we got the best team in the country, no matter what anybody says, no matter who he is or where he comes from or whether he teaches or professes or is just a student or whatever he is . . ."

The sentence was obviously too involved for him and a canonade of applause saved him the embarrassment of finishing it. He leapt agilely over the banister and resumed his seat by Marion; everyone within reaching distance pounded him on the back as he passed.

Smilin' Syd spoke in a plain, matter-of-fact tone which simply added enthusiasm and emphasis to the occasion. Instead of quieting the crowd, he only excited it all the more.

Cap'n Fullingim was next. He was a beefy farmer, with health and dirt embedded in his sunburned face. He was the captain of the last team that had beaten Tate, and as he lifted his drawling cowboy voice in exhortation the students listened with reverent attention.

"I don't reckon many of you-all remember me," he began. "But I came five hundred miles to see you whip that bunch of chorus girls to-morrow."

"Ho hoo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo. Chorus girls!" the crowd echoed.

"And I believe you can do it, gang. Lissen, do you want to know what I'm proudest of about havin' been to this old school? Do you s'pose it's 'cause I made A on a chemistry quiz once? Bull-ll-ll! 'Course not. I'll tell you what I'm proudest of. I'm proudest of bein' in the team that licked that bunch of belly-rubbin' jelly beans from Tate."

"Yessir-rr. Whoopppee-ee-ee-ee. Jelly beans!" the crowd taunted. Cap'n Fullingim went on to detail his exploits and to spur his successors on the field to battle to victory, then sat down amid a typhoon of applause.

Then came the doctor's turn.

"Lay-dee-ee-ees and gentlemen," screamed Johnny Tippy, in his best side-show manner. "If ye'll step right up close we'll

have the fat lady skin a cat now." The crowd relaxed to laugh, and Johnny saw that he was losing its attention. "Now we're gonna have a speech from our Prexy on who's gonna win that game to-morrow. Le's have nine for Prexy."

"Rah rah rah! Rah rah rah! Rah rah rah! Prexy!"

The doctor pulled his vest securely down over his belt buckle and stepped out to the center of the floor. Even before he reached his position the crowd had settled into an ominously and unpleasantly quiet state. He was aware that it had grown slightly but ever so certainly hostile. The students were waiting, and they were—he did not know why—depressed and embarrassed. He lifted his voice, but it sounded plaintive and feminine after so much noise.

"To-morrow the Mavericks meet Tate in our annual classic. Twenty thousand eyes will be fastened upon our boys. Throughout the country hundreds of thousands will be waiting to see what account we give of ourselves. And they will see. I am just as confident as I am that I'm standing here that we are going to win."

There was a deathly silence for one interminable second, and then Johnny Tippy shouted. He frightened the others into consciousness and there was a rattle of polite handclapping. It was polite, and the doctor knew it. He had invoked the device others had used so successfully, but with no success.

He began again. He exhorted the team and the students to emerge victorious. There were cheers, but they sounded forced and considerate. Quickly he drew his talk to a close, urging the team to play fair. As he walked back to his place there were nine more "rahs" for him, and he heard someone in the stands shout, "Good old Prexy!" But to him in his great sense of failure it sounded very much like "Nice old Rover."

There followed a speech by Professor George Witherspoon, who had the singular record of having attended every athletic contest held during every one of the ten years he had been on the faculty. There were other speeches, but the doctor slipped quietly out. He felt distinctly melancholy as he started the motor of his car and, with the din of the great occasion ringing in his ears, drove in the direction of the cozy and hospitable residence of Stephen Buck.

WHEN the doctor stepped into the benign library of Stephen Buck he felt as though he had escaped a storm and found sanctuary in a mountain cabin. The place seemed remote from the haunts of man and Judge Buck an old monk whose business it was to cheer the weak and lift the fallen. Dr. Dickey half expected to see a huge St. Bernard dog lumbering and sniffing about the room. Instead there was only Shep, who yawned abysmally over the commotion of the doctor's entry and then settled down lazily onto his paws, too indolent to rescue anybody even on a moonlit night. It was all very pleasant and very soothing. . . .

"Doctor," the judge said as solemnly as though he were about to make an important address, "I am glad to see you."

"Thanks." The chancellor settled down, timid and reticent—a little boy calling on his grandma and waiting for cookies.

"Have a cigar," the judge invited. "I've a new box. They are fresh and mild; as advertised. I'll venture you haven't smoked since you were here last."

"Well, once or twice. At banquets and so on. Paul says be all things to all men you know." He hastened to smile at this quaint and near-profane use of the Apostle's utterance. Then, with as much grace as he could command, he began stripping the cigar of its foil. Had the whole process of smoking not been a ritual to him he would have looked very much like a monkey eating a banana. When the foil had been removed he laid the cigar on his expansive lap, slowly rolled the wrapping between his hands, then wadded it up and tossed it accurately into the fire. The band he preserved and slipped absent-mindedly over the end of his little finger. He took a small penknife from his pocket and cut away the end of the cigar very solemnly and then placed it firmly between his teeth. The match which Judge Buck handed him remained unstruck.

"You had a great trip, I hear," the judge said.

The doctor was indifferent. "Yes, I suppose so. I've got to

consult with you about one or two items later," he continued abjectly, "but let them wait. How have you been?"

"Not bad. Not bad. I had hoped you would come over sooner." There was the faintest note of accusation in his voice.

"I have been terribly busy," the doctor said, looking up hurriedly. "Terribly. I have wanted to talk with you very often, but it seemed that I couldn't find the time. Committee meetings of every kind. Cranks who want to save the university. Students. All varieties of pests. I get terribly tired of it all."

"I imagine you do, Dickey. And don't you sometimes wonder if all of it or any of it really matters?"

The doctor was pained. "Oh, no. I wouldn't say that. But then . . ." His voice trailed off and he looked far into the fire. "It's really a great cause, you know." As if the statement needed a gesture to give it force, he struck the match viciously across the bottom of his shoe and puffed at the cigar.

"Well, you've certainly got a great football team out there this year." The judge seemed to be searching for common ground upon which the two could meet; it was not to be found in their theories of the value of education.

"Fine bunch of boys," the doctor agreed. "Great fighters and all of them manly."

Buck was silent for a moment, and the doctor had the feeling that he had started to mention Devil's Dam and had thought better of it. At last he went on enthusiastically:

"I used to play. It was rough in those days. Damn rough, if you don't mind my saying so. I remember the first college I ever went to was Carrington College, out in Texas. They grew men in those days. There was big Red Thompson, a cow-puncher who, to my certain knowledge, never got past the eighth grade in the academy, and he was there five years. But what's that got to do with it? Red was the greatest player I have ever seen on the field, and I have been East."

"Better than Harmon?" the doctor asked, surprised.

"Well, I wouldn't say that," the judge reconsidered. "But better in a different way. Harmon is fast and shifty and he can pass and punt. He's what your sport writers call a quadruple-threat man. Red couldn't kick. If he did kick it was just as likely to be in one direction as another. He didn't know foot-

ball any more than he knew science. The science of football would have sounded awfully funny to Red. All he knew was to take the ball and run like hell. He wasn't shifty. If anyone got in his way, all he knew to do was to run over the guy. It would have seemed cowardly to him to try to dodge a fellow.

"And another funny thing was," the judge continued, settling down into a posture of supreme contentment, from which his memory seemed to function best, "was that he didn't know any signal but his own. We didn't have this huddle system some of them use to-day. I wish we had; but we never heard of it. If we had we would have thought it was awfully sissy—all right for a girl's school but no good to us. Like a conference of the missionary society. Scooter Dibrell called signals. He was a cowpuncher and was as bow-legged as a Democratic cartoon of Teddy Roosevelt. He would bark out the numbers until I sometimes thought he'd start a stampede on the nearby ranges. We'd line up on the old formation. None of these fancy formations for us."

The judge got down on the hearth. "Here was the center. Here was the quarter and the backs were in a straight line behind him." He stepped back to demonstrate and stepped on Shep's tail. The dog raised a howl more in protest than anger and the judge turned to him sympathetically. "Will you pardon the old man? I was just showing Dickey here how we lined up in the old days." Then he sat back in his chair.

"Course that wasn't as bad as it used to be when they used the phalanx. I guess after all we were playing sort of advanced and modernized football, so far as formation went. But not in skill. As I was saying, Scooter would bark out the signals. Howl 'em out would be better. We didn't have any interference worth talking about. And Red couldn't figure out any use for what we did have. He thought that was sort of girlish, too. Sort of co-educational, I reckon. He didn't need it, so why should anybody? I don't know whether that was his theory or not. Maybe he was just bull-headed, but he wouldn't play unless Scooter called his signal. That's why I say he didn't know any but his own. If he wasn't to run with the ball—that was all he thought playing was—why, he just sort of sat down after the play

started and stared after the scrimmage in the melancholy manner of a lost calf. It was funny."

The doctor was suddenly aware that he had forgotten his committees and the awareness of the fact made him momentarily conscious of them again. But he pushed them from his mind with a stern grimace and leaned forward in his chair. "So that's the way we played," the judge resumed when he had lighted his cigar again. "Out there in West Texas that was all right and nobody noticed it. That was the way everybody played. But one year the coach arranged to have us drop down to Fort Worth to play a school called Polytechnic, an old school with a powerful team for those days. They had beaten State the year before and State had mopped up on most everything else in the commonwealth. So we were all pepped up over the prospect.

"The coach—he was just an ordinary teacher of mathematics—tried to drill us on some fancy plays, but they never went very well, even in practice. He must have read about the hidden ball and the delayed pass. Well, we were about as capable of working the hidden ball and delayed pass as a freshman scrub would have been in runnin' through our line of two-hundred-pound cowpunchers. But the coach couldn't see it. He drilled us all one week on a play where Scooter was to get the ball and put it behind the guard's leg. Then I was to run up and get it and whirl and pass it to Red Thompson, who was stationed just behind tackle. He was to go around end. You can see it wouldn't have been any great whiz if it had worked out perfectly.

"We got all ready and started for Fort Worth. It was a long ride down there, and I don't think Red had ever been on anything but a cattle train before. I am sure he had never seen a newsbutch before. He insisted upon sitting up all night and swapping yarns with the butch and eating candy. The coach protested, but Red just grinned and told him this wasn't any schoolroom and that he'd better go back to bed. (We were all sleeping in our seats.) The train was late, and we didn't hit Fort Worth until about eleven o'clock. We were to play at three. Red hadn't slept a wink and he was getting a little groggy when we stepped off the train.

"We dressed in the dormitory—all of us except Red, and he insisted on dressing in the toilet on the train. Well, there was a big crowd out to see the cowpunchers. Both teams ran signals a little and Red wanted to try the hidden ball trick. Said he had forgotten how it went. But the coach looked him straight in the eye and said, No! Red sulked but he didn't say anything more.

"We might have been all right if it hadn't been for the fact that Poly got to receive. We kicked off to them and the fellow that got the ball ran forty yards before Red finally got him. This was such a shock we didn't know just what to do. The truth is we had never seen a team like that before. They were light and fast and well trained. On the next down they worked a beautiful forward pass and Scooter had to run the man down before he could stop him. On the next play they went right through our line for a touchdown.

"Well, we were flabbergasted. I never saw a bunch so surprised. It was brawn against skill. And the brawn had never seen any skill before. We received next time, but it didn't do us any good. Not a bit. Believe it or not, Red tried to go through the line like a steer, and without any interference or hole, and they piled him like manure. I wish you could have seen the pain on that man's face. He tried again, but the same thing happened. Three or four men got right under him, and that was all there was to it. Well, Poly got the ball right away and made another touchdown.

"What were we to do?" The judge had reached his desired dilemma and he paused for effect and for a new light. The doctor sat tensely, wishing he could have seen that game. "Well, I'll tell you what we did," he renewed. "We worked that hidden ball and delayed pass. Scooter called the signal but of course Red Thompson never moved an inch. He called it again and all of us got in position. I took Red and put him behind tackle and whispered something in his ear. He shook his head and I gave him a boot in the pants. I wouldn't have risked it any other time, but I was desperate. He sulked a minute, then got down into position. Scooter barked a few more signals, and the ball was snapped. He shoved it behind the big guard's leg, right in the elbow, so to speak, and it stuck. Meanwhile I ran up and

got it and whirled to hand it to Red. Wonder of wonders! Red was there and ready to go. He grabbed the ball out of my hands and was off like a wild ox. Everything looked perfect for a moment, and then it dawned on me—Red was running for the wrong goal. I started in pursuit and shouted as loud as I could, but there was no stopping Red. He was gone. He ran the forty yards to our own goal in the twinkling of a star.

"When he got there he must have been puzzled or suspicious or something, for he didn't touch the ball down. The crowd along the sidelines were howling their heads off. Two or three Poly players rushed up and tried to tackle Red. I think he saw there was something wrong. He stood there like a mad bull for a minute and it came to him what it was all about. He gritted his teeth, dug his toes in the ground, snorted, and started for the Poly goal. I've seen Eastern games and I've seen the Mavericks, but I never saw a run like that. Those Poly boys would hit him and bounce off like rubber balls. At one time I saw three men with some sort of hold on him. But they never fazed him. He was mad and he was gone. He ran one hundred and forty yards for a touchdown, and he never stopped until he had laid the ball down tenderly between the Poly goal posts.

"They beat us 10 to 5," the judge added, "but we scared the life out of them on that play, and the rest of the game was see-saw."

"What became of Red?" the doctor asked eagerly.

"I think he's preaching somewhere out in West Texas or New Mexico," the judge replied. "I've lost track of him, but I'll never forget that game."

The two men were silent for a while. The doctor sat chewing on the stub of his cigar, and Judge Buck rocked back and forth in a reminiscent mood. Shep, taking advantage of the chance for a little petting, rubbed his nose under the judge's hand and was rewarded by a scuffle which stopped only after Shep persisted in barking at the top of his voice. When the judge had settled down again Dr. Dickey began:

"I feel apologetic for approaching you on a matter of business, but the truth is, I need your help again. I suppose I had

better tell you the whole story, and you will see where you come in."

The judge nodded attentively, and the doctor went on:

"While I was in Okmulgee, I managed at last to get hold of Effie Graham—Dave Graham's widow, you know. Rather sad case there, and all that, but she wanted to give some money to the university, and I felt that I ought to call on her. I had a very good contact, you see, with her through Swanson, who used to be her pastor.

"The old lady has the idea that the young people are going to the devil to-day, and in that she's not far wrong. When I was down there first, I preached a special sermon on the subject and pointed out the influence which good women can exercise. I never saw anyone so pleased as she was. The next time I was in town, she invited me to come out and call on her, and I did. We fell to talking about the university, and finally she said she wanted to give a million dollars if she could be convinced that it would do a lot of good.

"I had been thinking about her gift some, I confess, and when she said that, why, I told her of the plan I had to found an Effie Graham Center at the university; it would be a special dormitory, with a special corps of women advisers and everything fixed up for the production of fine, Christian womanhood. And that's very important," he added, a bit argumentatively and a bit apologetically. "She thought well of the idea and agreed to turn over the million to me, or to our trustees. Before I left I had persuaded her that it would be nice to give another million to the endowment of the university."

"Well, I certainly congratulate you," the judge put in, and the doctor saw a twinkle in his eye that reminded him of Santa Claus. "I don't see how I could help a man like you."

"There are complications," the doctor replied. "Serious ones. The truth is, her two daughters and their husbands are protesting the gift on the absurd grounds that the old lady is not mentally competent. The case is going to be thrown into court, and it's going to be up to us, to you, to show that she is mentally balanced and that she is capable of disposing of the money as she sees fit."

The judge made no reply for a few minutes. "Well, Doctor,

"I'll take this case out of regard for you," he said finally. "I can't think of anything else that would persuade me to. I am tired of bitter legal battles, Horace. I don't like to make any more lifelong enemies. I have enough already, just because I was shrewd enough to handle cases successfully in court."

"I think I see your position," the doctor said, trying to be both friendly and official. "And I wouldn't urge this case upon you if I did not feel that you are the one man who could carry it successfully." He stopped abruptly. It seemed grotesque, urging the judge to take the case; perhaps if he said no more the judge would take it of his own accord. He felt somehow that he was desecrating their friendship.

By the time he left it was agreed that Judge Buck would be the university's advocate. And while the doctor was jubilant over the prospect he could not help feeling as he drove home that he had perhaps taken liberties with something sacred. The few hours with Judge Buck had been a refuge from his job, but now he was back in it again and he had done something he had wanted badly not to do: he had dragged his friend into his job.

The motor of his car sneezed for a while and then settled into a steady, good-natured growl. He drove through the campus of the university with some sense of pride. Even in the stillness of night it was his. And some time, in the stillness of some night, the buildings would stand as monuments to him. In the glare of the moonlight the buildings looked strangely like tombstones, and the thought that he would but add other tombstones depressed him.

Far out over the still night air came the screech of a cowboy yell. It echoed against Martha Sumner Hall and fell into the plush of the distance. To-morrow was the game.

MR. HAWK skinned a pair of print pajamas off his scrawny legs and hurried into a pair of clean woollen drawers. The trousers of one of his best suits lay on a chair near his bed, and he inspected them minutely for any trace of lint or dirt as he donned his black silk socks and pulled the legs of his underwear as high as he dared in November. An immaculate soft white shirt, trimmed down the front in black, hung on another chair, the buttons open and the collar gaping, as ready to fall on his shoulders as harness on a fireman's horse. As he tied his shoes he thrust himself into his trousers, spraddling ridiculously as he fastened the lower buttons of the front and lifting one leg as though it were a gear to make the process of slipping the galluses over the shoulder all the easier.

In the bathroom he felt his face with water, smeared it with lather, and then carved the lather off expertly with a safety razor, instinctively and unconsciously slowing down his movements as he approached the edges of his bas-relief mustache and the mobile lump of his Adam's apple.

It was Homecoming Day at Martha Sumner University and Mr. Hawk felt acutely responsible for its success. It was his motto—

“For Once We'd Rather Have Your Presence than Your Presents”—

that had bannered every page of every letter that had gone out. He was to speak at the alumni luncheon on “The Alumni as Satisfied Customers”; indeed, every detail of arrangements had come within his scrutiny, and as the first event of the day approached—a series of sunrise breakfasts grouped according to classes of bygone days—he looked upon the whole and saw that it was good.

Nothing had been spared in the way of money or ink during the past six months to make this day a red-letter one of which any saint would have been proud. The superb lists which Colonel

Willingham had accumulated had been put into service the previous June, and there was not a known graduate or ex-student of the institution who had not received weekly letters urging him on to the great day when Tate and Martha Sumner clashed. Ed Stinson of Roaring Springs had been the first alumnus to send in his money for a reservation at the luncheon and the game; it took only a little urging to get him to send his picture later—a picture of hanging jowls joined by a thread of mouth and topped by a Shriner's cap. It made excellent material for the next mailing, serving as the display of a natty folder Colonel Willingham had got out. On the front the picture was enlarged and reproduced, and under it was the caption:

EDMUND JONATHAN STINSON, A.B. ('09)

Patriot, Business Man, Shriner, Civic Engineer—and
Best of All, Loyal Alumnus of Martha Sumner U.

Who Sent in on June 3rd His Reservation for the Big
Homecoming Luncheon and Game November 27th.

WHO'LL BE NEXT? WILL YOU BE LAST?

A bi-weekly bulletin was issued, giving the names, addresses, business, and the number of children of each alumnus and alumna. This was mailed with a blaring letter which the best talent of the school was employed to write. Once it went on stationery into which the smashing form of a football player was imbedded; the letter was written around the figure, so that he was drawn into clear relief. Again it went on a letterhead topped with a drawing of a kindly father and mother carved in a cloud over Martha Sumner Hall; an airplane trailing off toward the top of the sheet spelled the irresistible plea

"The Old Folks Want You Back."

The bulk of the letter was taken up with a free and helpful translation of Alma Mater as meaning simply "Dear Mother."

There was a postscript for the more learned of the departed ones to the effect that

"An Œdipus Complex Is a Healthy Sign if Your Mother's
MARTHA SUMNER U.

There was still another letter, sent out on mourning paper toward the last hour for reservations. It was decked in black and written solemnly to inquire if those who had not yet signed up intended to bury the sweet days spent in Alma Mater. There was one written in the form of a summons, on legal paper, bearing the seal of the university and the imprint of the chancellor, subpoenaing every loyal son and daughter to appear before the supreme tribunal and give evidence of his or her affection, and to serve later as the jury which should test the merits of the Tate Foxes and the Martha Sumner Mavericks. But the one which probably turned the trick was one composed in verse by Professor Finch and Colonel Willingham:

Heigh ho! Heigh ho! Give ear, give ear!
The Homecoming Season is almost here.
From over the mountains and over the plains
There float to us most mysterious strains;
We seem to hear from near and far
The whirring motor of many a car.

What what! What what! Well well! Well well!
The boys are returning from river and dell.
They are coming in Fords and Cadillacs too
To the gala event at Martha Sumner U.
We seem to hear from far and near
The resounding note of many a cheer.

Ha ha! Ha ha! Tee hee! Tee hee!
'Tis a season of rejoicing and unbounded glee.
It's a dear old, lucky old Alma Mater
To have so many sons of the very first water.
We seem to feel from far and wide
The expansion of chests in manly pride.

The opus frolicked on into fifteen verses, gathering tension as it went, until it closed amid the clashing of cymbals:

Bang bang! Bang bang! Boom boom! Boom boom!
The approach of the Day spells Tate's doom.
What shall we say, O Loyal Sons,
When we know the Day comes but once?
We seem to hear from land and sea
The answering shout, "You can count on me!"

Through the friendly and self-conscious offices of Hannah Judd, '14, who taught harmony in Palo Alto, the piece was set to a very jolly and appropriate tune. The music she composed was immediately broadcast, and the Maverick Clubs throughout the land were soon lilting it lustily at their weekly gatherings. And when they started on special trains and in caravans of cars toward the Oil City for the "Mardi Gras of football," one really could hear from far and near and near and far the melody wafted on the wings of song.

Hotels offered special rates and did some circularizing of their own, and Colonel Willingham persuaded the railroads leading into the War Zone to offer excursion rates. A systematic cultivation of the fraternities and sororities was undertaken, and each Greek cult was urged to make Thanksgiving the Day when loyal brothers of days ago returned to the council chamber. Caps in university colors were distributed gratis by a local sporting-goods house, with nothing but a card and a letter to indicate that the object was advertisement, and these were ordered by the chancellor of the university to be worn instead of hats on the Great Day. As for the press, the whole scheme for the Homecoming got in over a week's time as much publicity as Devil's Dam had gotten in two days.

II

It was only normal, then, that Mr. Hawk, dressed in his crimson tie and black-trimmed shirt and wearing his funny little cap, should feel immoderately excited as he drew up in front of Stoningham Court that morning. John, in modest livery, had

driven him over and was ordered to wait at the curb; Mr. Hawk walked with sprightly tread up to the door and on to the desk. He was to attend a reunion sunrise breakfast of his own class, the Class of '08, and he inquired officiously of the clerk if any of his sunrise breakfast party had arrived.

"No, sir. Nobody up around here yet, sir," the girl told him as though she had never heard of a sunrise breakfast and, being as sleepy as she was, regarded them as perversions. "Whut time was it to be, sir?"

"Eight o'clock," Mr. Hawk replied guiltily as he glanced at his own watch, compared it with the clock on the wall, and found that by the faster of the two pieces it was only seven-thirty-two.

"Well, I guess you're a little early, ain't you? Must not have had far to come." She looked at him curiously, but Mr. Hawk, evidently feeling that she was trying to get his address, only turned away and drummed the desk impatiently.

"Is there some place I could wait?" he asked.

"Sure. You can wait right here. Or else you can wait in the lounge in there. Mebbe you'd like a paper to read," she suggested. "Or are you old enough?"

He looked up at her sharply. Her eyes were smiling, and they wandered from his head to his throat and down his front. Suddenly he remembered what he had forgotten in his meditations—he was dressed like a playboy. He was young in looks again; he smiled sheepishly and was moved to tickle the girl under the chin just to show her he was a good sport.

"Oh, yes. I think I'm old enough to read, thank you. Ha-ha! I'm a great hand for looking younger than I really am."

"Yeah? I thought you looked awful young."

"How old do you think I am *to-day*?"

"You're not a day over twenty, sugar daddy."

"Well, now——" He was greatly embarrassed. She did want his address. The harpy!

"Whut are you wearin' all those funny clothes for? Shriners' convention?"

"We're having an alumni meeting here. One of the various ones in the city," he told her, but he was edging off confusedly.

"A whut?"

"Alumni meeting, I tell you."

"Whut's that?"

"A meeting of all those who have graduated from a university."

"Oh, you're a college man?" She looked at him with evident respect.

"Yes."

"And a rah-rah boy?"

"Well—— I think, if you don't mind, I'll just step in here and read the paper."

"Sure. Suits me all right." She regarded him with unleashed curiosity now, and he felt very uncomfortable as her gaze followed him out of the lobby. Even as he took up a position beyond her scope of vision, he felt still that she was staring at him.

The morning paper in one of the eight columns of its front page flaunted statistics which he seized upon and devoured hungrily:

15,000 WILL VIEW GRIDIRON CLASSIC

Fifteen thousand! That many would come out to see Martha Sumner play! How that would center public attention on the university! Hurriedly his eye sped down the account, taking in every detail and even noting the typographical errors:

All available seats and standing space for the game between Tate and Martha Sumner at the Coliseum Stadium has been sold out, Dr. L. P. Leveridge, director of athletics, announced at 10 o'clock last night. It is estimated that over 15,000 people, the largest crowd ever to see a football game in this section, will look on when the referee's whistle sends two bloodthirsty aggregations driving at each other this afternoon.

Unprecedented demands for seats, swelled by the presence of more than 2200 alumni in the city for the annual Homecoming at the University, has necessitated playing the game at the municipal stadium, Dr. Leveridge announced. He pointed out that the small grandstand on the campus of the university would not begin to hold the crowd.

At this point the story broke over into the sporting section, and he turned the pages avidly, spanked the paper into smoothness,

and settled a little lower in his chair. The page on which his story was found proved to be far too exciting for him to go on with a merely statistical account. Across the top of it ran the stirring caption:

MAVERICKS PLAN TO AVENGE SEVEN YEARS OF
DEFEAT IN TODAY'S CLASSIC

Over the left column of the page he found the headlines of the story:

WILL FLASH BRILLIANT RUNNING ATTACK
BUILT AROUND HARMON TO HUMBLE
UNDEFEATED LADS FROM TATE

LOCALS CONFIDENT OF VICTORY

Smilin' Syd and Battlin' Squad Out
To Win Scalps Today

When the undefeated giants of Martha Sumner stalk onto the field at the Coliseum Stadium this afternoon, it will be with the fervent hope and prayer that they can humble the haughty aggregation from Tate and wipe out the blot of seven successive years of overwhelming defeats they have suffered at the hands of the Foxes. The shades of Smith, Boynton, Kimball, and others—great Mavericks in their time—will be hovering near to see the carnage.

The Mavericks enter an 8 to 5 favorite and are confident of victory. . . .

What was the meaning of the phrase, "8 to 5 favorite"? Was there actual betting on the contest? Mr. Hawk remembered that he had seen the term used often before, but betting was of course against the law. It was probably only a clever writer's way of saying that the chances of victory were 8 to 5.

He hurried through the account, noting that the mighty Boynton of days past would be in the stands and that other prominent alumni had returned for the classic. Boynton was to address the

team in the gym immediately before they took the field, that Harmon, "the greatest of all quadruple-threat men since Jim Thorpe," was the mainstay of the Maverick defense and the cannon of their withering attack, that Tommy Orr was doubtless the dark horse of the day and that he would have to be watched on every play:

In Orr and Harmon the Mavericks possess the best combination that has been seen on a Southern field in recent years. Both are fast and both are dangerous. It is possible for the Tate defense to be built for stopping Sphinx Harmon, yet the presence of the ghostly Tommy Orr complicates matters a hundred-fold. If Tate stops Harmon, there is still Orr to contend with, and it is inconceivable to think of a defense which could safely stop both men. . . .

Then there was Big Chief Youngblood of the Tate Foxes, who seemed on paper at least as great a threat at the mighty Sphinx. . . . It was all terribly exciting, and Mr. Hawk started for a moment when the absurd possibility that the game might not be played flashed through his mind.

There were other items which caught and held his eye—among them a boxed display of both teams, giving the position, weight, speed, chest measurement, leg circumference, number, height, and nickname of each player. Lovingly Mr. Hawk ran his eye down the list set under the name of Martha Sumner U:

"At 'Em" Adams, tackle
"Tommy the Cat" Orr, quarter
"Sphinx" Harmon, full back
"Ox" Rountree, tackle
"Red" Boyce, guard
"Ram" Bollinger, guard
"Swede" Borgson, center
"Sloppy" Fife, half back
"Tobe" Wells, end
"Beef" Shillinggreen, end.

He read each statistic after each name with sharp eye, comparing the figures mechanically with those of the opposing player, and

when he had finished his comparative analysis his eye wandered quickly to the picture of the

TATE COACH WHO SAYS MAVERICKS HAVE PAPER TEAM

He was a growling bear of a man whose picture stood in sharp contrast to

SMILIN' SYD HUDDLESTON WHO SMILES OVER PROSPECTS

There was of course a huge picture of Sphinx with the caption:

HUMAN TANK TATE WILL TRY TO STOP

And there were insets of Tommy Orr, Swede Borgson, Big Chief Youngblood of Tate—"the heap big savage on the war-path"—and lesser stars upon whom the spotlight would turn that afternoon.

And there was a marvelously sentimental story which Mr. Hawk liked enormously. It had a human-interest head, and the chairman of the board was on the verge of tears before he was halfway through it:

The shade of Big Bill Swearingen, American Ace killed in action, will hover over Coliseum Stadium this afternoon, brooding in the hope that his Alma Mater will triumph over the age-old rival squad from Tate. Swearingen will be remembered as the tornado of the old Seaton College eleven of days ago; he played with the Mavericks from 1910 to 1913 and during that time Seaton defeated Tate—twice ingloriously. . . . Col. Grover C. Willingham, business manager of the University, was reminiscing last night and wishing Big Bill were back for to-day's game. . . .

The story went on, not merely to chronicle Big Bill's exploits in the days when men were men, but to catalogue the living alumni of better days whose physical shades would look on from the stands that afternoon. There was Captain Fullingim of the class of '13, Skeezi Otterbein of the same year, "Fan-Taz"

Richardson of the class of '15, and at least a dozen others, all of whom would be called upon, if time permitted, at the Homecoming Luncheon. Three of them had given interviews, which Mr. Hawk read as though they were the Scriptures of his morning devotions, to the effect that Harmon was the greatest player the South had seen, not even excepting the mighty Swearingen. . . .

It was really a gorgeous carnival of publicity, and it was only after he had strolled up and down the midway of it several times that he realized with a start that he had lost all sense of time. His watch, when at last he fumbled it out of his pocket, said it was eight-twenty, and he rushed out once more to the desk. The girl was there, puffing her hair with one hand and covering a yawn with the other; there were others in the lobby, but he could tell by the way they stared at him that they were not fellow alumni.

"Seen any of my crowd?" he asked offhand.

"Don't know as I have. It's still early, though. You're an early bird, ain't you?"

Once more he ignored her effort to get familiar with him and inquired: "Do you know where our breakfast is to be held?"

"No, sir. I'll ask Mr. Simpkins, though."

She went into an inner office and returned with what was apparently Mr. Simpkins. "Let's see," said Mr. Simpkins, "you're with this college crowd, aren't you?"

"I am. I reserved a special breakfast table for ten last week," Mr. Hawk replied commandingly. "Where will I find it?"

"Oh, it's all roped off at one end of the dining room, but there's no one here yet. If you'll just wait in there, sir," he suggested, pointing to the lounge, "I'll send the rest of your party in."

At fifteen minutes till nine the rest of Mr. Hawk's party showed up. He was a thin and obviously frightened man in a cheap suit and a loud tie. He hesitated a moment at the door and looked at Mr. Hawk timidly. Mr. Hawk got up and said a little curtly:

"Good-morning."

"Good-morning, sir," the man replied. "I've come to attend the alumni breakfast which they said was to be here for the class of '08. Do you know anything about it?"

"This is the place. I am Mr. Hawk."

"Oh, is this Mr. Hawk?" He was more frightened than ever, and childishly delighted. "I don't suppose you remember me

after all these years, Mr. Hawk." His manner was that of a hired hand, and he unconsciously rubbed his hand on his coat before offering it to the great industrialist. "I'm Lem Avery. I used to know you when we were in school, but I guess you've met a lot since then."

"Oh, yes, well, well. I'm glad to see you again, Lem." It was a part of the formality of the day for all alumni to call all others by their first names, though Mr. Hawk had forgotten it when he referred to himself.

"Have you been waiting just for me? Gee, I'm awfully sorry to have held things up. You see, I had to change cars at Denison, and I didn't get in till nearly eight o'clock."

Mr. Hawk calculated the distance from the station, made due allowance for Lem's having gone to a hotel, and concluded that the man must have come out on a street car.

"No, you haven't held us up at all. In fact, I'm afraid the others have all been tied up somewhere. I think we'll just go on in to breakfast, if you don't mind."

A table for ten, roped in Martha Sumner colors, stood at one end of the dining room, and Mr. Simpkins, assisted by the head waiter, took them there. The residents of the hotel were at breakfast, and the management had been thoughtless enough not to provide a screen for the alumni table, so that the two men, Mr. Hawk the industrialist in his cute little cap and red tie which matched the cherry in the center of his grapefruit, and Lem Avery in his mail-order suit and loud tie which didn't match anything, were very much at the mercy of the other diners. Mr. Hawk took off his little cap and wanted very much to put his napkin over his tie, but concluded he would look too much like an old man.

"I'm sorry I haven't got on any colors yet," Lem said. His face was streaked with shame and humiliation. "This is the best I could do." He fidgeted in his pocket and drew out a celluloid football some early vendor had sold him for a quarter and stuck it on his lapel. This gave him some sense of aristocracy, and he tackled his grapefruit, diving into it in a determined fashion that caused juice to squirt like water from a fireboat in the direction of Mr. Hawk. "Oh, I'm terribly sorry," he apologized, reaching clumsily with his napkin to remedy the damage.

"You can see I'm not much on this high life," he continued a few moments later. "I haven't had much chance to be since I left old Seaton College. Say, but that was a great place, wasn't it?"

Mr. Hawk nodded enthusiastically and let Lem talk on. The cogs of his own mind ground warmly, but he could hear Lem over the noise of their grating. Where in the name of hell were the rest of those who had promised to come?

"You see, I married right soon after I got out, and of course I don't regret it, though I guess it has kept me tied down pretty well in one place. We had a kid about the first year we moved to Shattuck. Now, of course, kids are fine. I wouldn't take a quart, as the feller says, for those I got now. And I've got six now. But they do tie you down. Why, do you know," he confided, "this is the first time I've been away from the wife since we were married? Yes, sir. That's a fact. The first time. And I didn't much want to come this time, but you folks up here were so cordial and kept on insistin' the way you did that Sofy finally says, 'Lem, I think you ought to go up to that Homecoming. They seem to want you awful badly. Me and the kids can make out all right.' That was last September, so I started looking around to get somebody to help the wife with the store. We ain't open to-day, but then there will be one day on each side of Thanksgiving I won't be there. I hope she gets along all right, though," he added, looking wistfully at the far side of the table.

Gradually he stopped talking. It was evident to Mr. Hawk that Lem Avery thought those letters had been a campaign to get him personally back to the university for the Day. It was evident, too, that Lem was lonely and that he felt out of place. So, in the spirit of the occasion, Mr. Hawk did the best he could to cheer Lem up, but he was glad when they had finished their breakfast and he had made the settlement for ten with the reckless girl at the cashier's desk, who called a cheery "Good-bye, boys" to them as they went out. Lem came to life again and remarked: "She's a pippin, ain't she?" but Mr. Hawk only smiled.

John was waiting where Mr. Hawk had hitched him two full hours before. Lem, evidently expecting that they would

take a street car, got into the tonneau at Mr. Hawk's invitation, but he was very much abashed.

"Say, I think this is swell," he said, "having your car all diked out in colors. I wish I could have a picture of it to take home to the kids."

III

If breakfast was a little trying, the rest of the day made up for it. The next thing on the programme was a parade of cars led by the Martha Sumner Cowboy Band; the line of march was to be down Gusher Street, the artery which led through the business section of Oil City, and after that the cars were to disband and tour the city and the university grounds, gathering again with their clans at the Hotel Derrick for the grand and glorious luncheon. Mr. Hawk, who had been appointed marshal of the day, drove at once to the Derrick with Lem and there managed to pick up Chancellor Dickey, Captain Fullingim of the Class of '13, Edmund Stinson, and a few others for his own car. Lem hung around rather pathetically, and though the marshal thought once or twice of asking him to find a seat in some other car, he finally suggested that he ride in front with John and let it go at that.

The parade swung into line at eleven o'clock sharp—only an hour after schedule—and from the moment the band blared out its first piece and the cars promptly drowned out the music with a thunderstorm of noise, it was a howling success. Following the band came Mr. Hawk's richly bedecked Packard, with Lem waving right and left from the front seat, and the other members of the official party smiling benignly from behind. Chancellor Dickey looked sublimely ridiculous in the big glasses which cut a wide circumference around his eyes and the little cap which sat on the top of his head like a jaunty nimbus. Colonel Willingham could easily have been mistaken for the president of the Shriners' Convention, or else missed entirely. Cap'n Fullingim was afraid no one would know just who he was, and so he boisterously singled out friends along the line of march and ballyhooed his greeting.

Following the marshal's car and its lordly occupants came a cowboy leading a yearling of the robust plains variety—the

mascot of the Mavericks. The yearling bellowed plaintively every few paces and did other uncivilized things, to the immense delight of the crowd that lined the streets and of the members of the Maverick Club, who followed in the loud regalia of their cult just behind. The three varsity yell leaders walked a few paces ahead of the club, going through just enough antics to show that they were full of clownish pep. Occasionally John Tippy, who now had the beard of a prospector, would rush up and goose the unlucky yearling, whereupon the animal would cavort and bellow and threaten to gore the young stalwart charged with the care of him.

There were a hundred cars behind the Maverick Club, and they differed one from the other only in the make of the machines and in the abundance of collegiate bunting they bore. The occupants were alumni and so monotonously alike that those along the line of march often had the impression that *that* car had passed before—must have gone around the block and gotten back in line. There were Cadillacs in predominance, a handsome sprinkling of Packards, a coterie of new Buicks, as many Dodges as there were Franklins, and twice as many Fords as there were Studebakers. All of them were gay as stick candy. In some cases the spokes of the wheels were interlaced with colors; in other cases the windshields were so heavily draped that nothing but a peephole was left for the driver; in still others the cars were tied up with gauze ribbon like a phoney and elaborate box of sweets.

Placards bearing warlike slogans and threats were as thick as in an I. W. W. parade. Two members of the Maverick Club staggered under the burden of a huge banner upon which was written in letters of blood:

T R A M P L E T A T E

And this spirited and belligerent injunction was dittoed on the back windows of practically every car. Some of the alumni had plied their own wits in the preparation of placards. There was one in a Cadillac asking

Why Try to Stop a Stampede? ? ? ?

Down the street one could see the banners dancing, flashing in the morning sun like starched Victorian petticoats and bearing their messages to the world on the wings of high enthusiasm.

We're Out For Blood

The Tate Foxes Will Be Coyotes When We're Through

Take the "T's" Out of Tate

Murder 'em, Martha

Maul 'Em, M. S. U.

Mess 'Em Up, Martha Sumner

Remember the Alamo

They'll Call It Sewerside

To which should be added the buffoonery of beardless oil magnates and expressionless clerks unchained from their bonds and desks for a day of fun, shouting loudly and slapping the backs of their chunky, corsetted wives or the backs of their emancipated companions. It was really too jolly for words. Men who had never seen a cowboy would rise to the traditions of his section and bellow at the top of his voice, "Hook 'em, cowboy!" whereupon someone would answer hoarsely from the car behind, and the man who shouted would settle back, nervous and flushed at so much publicity; then his wife would look at him timidly, and he would smile, and they would assure each other and the other occupants of the car that they were having the time of their lives.

On up Gusher Street and toward Seaton Heights (the name of which Chancellor Sweeney had tried in vain to change to Martha Sumner Highlands) the parade pushed its glacier way. The band and the Maverick Club and the mascot dropped out as the crowd thinned down to hamburger vendors who stepped out on the streets in their aprons, and watery-eyed derelicts turned to gaze and sneer and then shuffle on their way.

Time was passing swiftly, and there was yet a luncheon before the game. The inspection of the plant at Martha Sumner, therefore, took on the perfunctory character of most inspections. Captains of the various groups had been appointed and had been provided with mimeographed sheets of information. . . . This is Martha Sumner Hall you are now approaching—an honor to the institution and a fitting memorial to the benefactor whose name it bears. It sets the standard of architecture and is worthy of other buildings in its class, which Chancellor Dickey hopes soon to add. . . .

. . . Those unsightly shacks in the background are emergency units erected to take care of the overflow of students flocking in ever-increasing numbers each year to the institution. They are for journalism, commerce, engineering, and geology, and are to be replaced as quickly as possible with modern up-to-date buildings with steam heat and electricity and first-rate equipment. They are an eyesore to the community and a reflection upon the institution which fails to meet the needs of the rising generation. . . .

. . . That old grandstand you see out yonder is the only one Martha Sumner has had since the days of old Seaton College, with only a few units added now and then. They are building some attractive stadiums now, beautiful and classical in architecture and all that. . . .

So the guides hawked on, selecting the scenic spots for special comment only to show up the lagging state of the rest of the campus.

. . . Yes, those are girls' dormitories, and Chancellor Dickey has just announced plans for the erection of a single one larger than all the rest—to be called Effie Graham Memorial Hall. It will stand right over there to the side. No. Just to the left. Then the boys, who haven't enough room yet, poor fellows, can have some of the girls' space. That? That's the chapel. Most of the big university functions have to be held there, and it isn't large enough by any means. We have an expert gardener laying out the campus now, and within a year or so it will be the most lovely in the South. . . .

Under expert care the groups roamed the campus, meeting each other here and there, wise-cracking, helloing, playing like small

children on a Sunday-school picnic. Then one group made a dash for the cars, and the others realized that the time for the luncheon had come, and all of them entrained and started in a swift caravan to the Derrick.

IV

Ga-zella, ga-zella, ga-zella, ga-say,
Get out, get out, get out of the way,
Cannibal, Cannibal, Siss Boom Bah!
Mavericks! Mavericks! Rar! Rah! Rah!

In the center of a huge room swarming with alumni, the Maverick Club, its energies directed by that tireless zealot of victory, John Tippy, was whooping it up on the new yells. As many guests as could be seated were stationed at tables, and the remainder were standing about the walls, consuming sandwiches and drinks as fast as they could be relayed by those at the tables. At the end of each yell the diners would let out a deafening roar of approval, which was like the bursting of some great dam by enraged waters. Then the cry of "More! More!" and "We want more!" would echo through the room and nothing would satisfy the merrymakers but another yell or else a rollicking piece by the band. When the band commenced it was the signal for a Gargantuan bellow of glee; this over, the alumni took their hands from the food long enough to join rhythmically in the chorus of systematic clapping to the beat of the music.

"Now, laydeese and gentlemen and fellow alumni, let me have your attention." It was Colonel Willingham speaking. He got up from the speakers' table, where Chancellor Dickey and the other celebrities sat smiling and a trifle subdued by so much spontaneous noise, and rapped loud on a cowbell which he had provided for the occasion. Either because he was very popular or because the crowd thought the cowbell a rather nice idea or possibly because they wanted to holler, there was a hurricane of applause to greet him. He smiled in the teeth of it, adjusted his owl glasses, and held up his hand for silence.

"Now, as you all know, our time is short!"

"Hurrah!"

"Hooray!"

"Tell 'em about it, Willy!"

The boy in the band who had the bass horn blasted it, and everyone broke out into laughter. Colonel Willingham smiled less good-naturedly than formerly and held up his hand again, this time like a traffic cop.

"We all know that we must be getting on out to the Stadium for that big game——"

"Y-yea-a-a-a-a-a. Right you are, Willy!"

"Hurrah! Hooray! Tell 'em about it, Willy!"

Young John Tippy leaped up on a table, supported by his two subordinates, and shouted through his hands:

"Anybody down-hearted?"

An explosion of denial answered him.

"Everybody happy?"

It was an answer to the gods that they gave.

"Aw right, then, gang! Nine for Willy!"

Willy took his third curtain call with as much good grace as possible and tried once more to speak. It was evident, though, as his lips moved again, that the crowd had passed beyond control. Toward the back of the room a worn banner wagged:

Why try to stop a stampede?

When at last, after a whispered conference with Chancellor Dickey and Mr. Hawk, he was able to make himself heard, he continued:

"We won't have time for our regular programme, though I am sure you would all want to hear Chancellor Dickey and Mr. Hawk if we had the occasion for it. I'm going to take the liberty of calling on a man you all know, I am sure. I don't know of any man who is better loved around this school than the man I'm going to ask to say a few words."

"Whosit?"

"Name him."

"Stick him up!"

"I refer to none other than Cap'n Fullingim, one of the finest players we ever had in this institution."

He would probably have gone on with the introduction but a thunderclap of cheering cut him short, and Cap'n Fullingim, smiling and staggering, mounted the speaker's stand. John Tippy

took occasion to ask for nine rahs for Fully, and the crowd cut loose with a response that rocked the steel girders of the building.

"I'm not mush of a speesh-maker," Fullingim apologized, but the crowd wouldn't hear of it.

"We want Fully!" they shouted in an ague of mirth. "Stay in there, Cap'n. What's the matter with Fully? HE'S ALL RIGHT!"

"But I'd jus' like to shay a few words in behalf of the alumni."

At this he laughed raucously, and it must have been evident even to the incredulous Dr. Dickey that his hilarity was not due entirely to the spirit of the occasion.

"Hurrah! Hooray!"

"Ride 'em, cowboy!"

"In the firsh place," Fully went on, "I want that team out there to know we're behin' 'em to the limit." He bounced on his heels and flung out his arms in an earnest gesture. The team, stripped for a last minute rub-down a mile and a half away, heard the roaring, sizzling antiphony which greeted his exhortation.

"An' you know, I've been thinking, fellers." He paused, embarrassed. "That is, fellers and ladies."

"Ha! Hah! Don't forgit the ladies, Fully!"

"I've been thinking we ought to all do something here to-day while we all feel so good. An' we djew feel good, don' we?"

"I'll say so! You whisper it to 'em, Fully! Hurrah! Hooray!"

"Well, here 'tis," Fully stumbled on, licking his lips and enjoying the publicity sinfully. "What we ought to djew is zis: We ought to build out there on that there campus, ash a memorial to the boysh that died at the front, a real, spanking good stadium, so we can all sit down nex' year and let other folks sit down. What do you shay to that?" He bounced on his heels again and threw up his hands in a forceful if ineffectual supplicating gesture.

It would have required some finely keyed instrument to detect any decline in enthusiasm at the mention of a project which called for money. Fully had the crowd, and the applause which met his suggested memorial to the shades of the "exes" shook the dishes in the kitchen of the Derrick.

But Fully wasn't through. "Now, I'd like to shay I'll be the

firs' man to give a thousand dollars. *A thousand dollars.* How you like that?" When the hosannas had ceased he repeated to Colonel Willingham: "Me and the old woman'll give a thousand dollars, Your Honor the Colonel. Who'll be next? I'll call 'um off, Colonel, and you take 'em down!"

A few moments later, after a collection in good Methodist fashion, there was fifty thousand dollars in prospect, and Chancellor Dickey sat with his eyes bulged out at the sight. Then, just as Lem Avery was leading off the list of those who would give five hundred apiece, a young man with a rather sober countenance got up and said:

"Mr. Chairman, if you please."

"How much?" Colonel Willingham demanded.

"I'd like to say a word, sir."

"Throw him out," someone shouted.

"Down in front!"

"Give or let give!"

The young man held up his hand for silence. "Fellow alumni, I think we've done splendidly."

"Hurrah! Hooray!"

"I think, in fact, we've done enough for this time."

By habit the crowd shouted, "Hooray!"

"I think, if you ask me, that we ought to say we'll raise this much, this fifty thousand, if the city and the students will raise the rest. What do you say to that?"

There was a round of handclapping, a movement of chairs and tables, and without any warning or apology, the crowd began to empty out of the dining room. Those in charge suddenly realized that, whether they willed it or not, the luncheon was over. It was only a little more than two hours till time for the game. . . .

TWENTY-THREE

AW, GODAMIGHTY, Tom, I wisht you'd stop that bawl-in'."

Tommy sat on a bench in the locker room, naked to the waist, his grimy face contorted with weeping. He looked up bewildered at Sphinx, and then buried his head in his heavily taped hands. Other players, most of them stripped of their jerseys, stalked about like stevedores in the subtle, ghastly light of the room. At the rubbing table a Negro in a bright red cap was smearing liniment over the back of a lad who groaned convulsively and swore through his teeth as the black man's hands gouged at the tender spots. On a bench at one end of the room, his chin imbedded in his palm, sat Smilin' Syd Huddleston, an ironic picture of dejection. Occasionally he shifted his chin from one palm to the other, staring in a daze at the half-naked figures before him.

"Some of you guys help me pull off this goddam sock," a slender youth called out, and then sank back exhausted to wait for aid. No one paid any attention to him for a moment, then a towering monster limped across the room, stooped, yanked the sock off and threw it hard against the cold concrete floor.

"Jeeze, I hope I never see another football, so help me God," someone wailed.

By now the substitutes and rookies were returning from the showers, folding their togs into neat bundles and tucking them away in lockers. They plied their way silently, grimly, like ghosts, carefully avoiding contact with the men who struggled awhile to undress, then rested a moment and struggled again.

Tommy's wailing had not ceased. He had fallen over on the bench, and his chest and stomach heaved grotesquely as he sobbed. Sphinx walked over to him and kicked his feet.

"Lissin, Thomas, am I gonna have to beat hell out o' you or will you just shut up like I tell you?"

Tommy sat up and rubbed his hairy arm across his eyes. "I cain't help it, Sphinx. honest, I cain't." His lips quivered, and he stared up pleadingly at the big athlete. "It's hell, boy, to not do

anything but tie that bunch. And it was all my fault!" This announcement of something he had told himself a hundred times loosed another flood of tears.

"Aw cripes, Tommy, it wasn't your fault, any more'n it was mine," Sphinx consoled him. "We did everything we could. There's no use to bellyache about it now. We'll get 'em next year, kid."

"But if I just hadn't fumbled. If I had just 'a' held onto that goddam ball. Oh, hell," he wailed again.

"Well," said Sphinx philosophically, "it ain't as if you got the craw de gear as being the only guy that ever fumbled a football. It's been done before. Come on, buck up!"

Biting his lip stoically, Tommy managed to quiet his sorrow. He snatched absently at the tape which bound his fingers and unwound it like an old woman darning. Sphinx looked at him a moment, then, a bit sheepishly and turning to see if any of the others were watching, he knelt on the cement floor and unfastened Tommy's shoes.

Smilin' Syd got up and walked like a disagreeable drunk to the center of the room. For a moment he did not speak but merely gazed about him like a tormented animal. Then he said:

"We ought to had that game, gang."

There was silence, save for the distant chatter of substitutes under the shower and the slam of a locker door.

"We ought to had that game," he repeated.

The silence now seemed menacing. Sphinx, having removed Tommy's pants as tenderly as if they had been a baby's hippins, stood up and sighed.

"Well," Smilin' Syd went on, "we got a hard year's work ahead of us, gang. Everybody rest up good till spring, and then let's get in shape again. We'll clean that gang next year or I'll pay off."

Then he turned on his heel like an orderly and went out.

"Next year! Goddam!"

"I'm through. Who'll buy my britches?"

"I got a jockey strap I'll sell."

"I think I'll join the army."

"I'd like a nice soft job breakin' rock on the county farm."

"How many of you bozos are gonna get stewed to-night?"

"I gotta rest up a bit."

"Who's got a cigarette?"

The slender lad who had finally gotten his socks off reached into his locker with a great display of secrecy and drew out an unopened pack. The crew crowded round him.

"Betcha haven't got a match," someone said.

"Like hell I haven't," he retorted, muscling out a box triumphantly. "I've had these damn matches since the day school opened."

"You girls can have your damn cigarettes," Sphinx chided. "I'll take my peachy plug." He rummaged around in his own locker until he uncovered a cake wrapped in foil. Taking it out, he peeled it with loving care and tore off a huge chunk with his teeth. Tommy, still sitting disconsolately on the bench, caught the plug as Sphinx tossed it to him and wrenched off a sufficient chew to swell his jaw. He began at once to appear more contented and got up to spit through the basement window.

All in all the spirit of the varsity was on the improvement. Ox slapped Beef across the shoulders with a towel, and Beef, not quite energetic enough to give battle, wadded up a sock and lambasted his tormentor on the jaw with deadly accuracy.

"Boy! Yum-yum. Think how that turkey'll taste!"

"Turkey, hell! I'm goin' down to Sol's and get all the damn ham and eggs he's got in the place. I'm gonna eat so much it'll be like feedin' the five thousand all over again."

"Who the hell stole my drawers?"

"Look in your britches pocket."

"Hurry up with that towel, you sawed-off Dutchman."

"Who tha hell wants it?"

There was a scuffle, which brought down the scorn of the others on the combatants.

"My God! Ain't you guys had enough exercise for one day? Mebbe you'd like to go up and scrub the main building."

Someone started lilting "The old gray mare ain't what she uset to be," and others joined raucously in the discordant chorus. "At 'Em" Adams came back from the shower, looking very harmless, and Sloppy Fife discovered that the tackle had dirt all over his back.

"Go wash, Aunt Fannie. Go wash. Lookit, gang!"

The gang looked and "At 'Em," very humble by now, took a

parting swing at Sloppy's naked thighs with his open hand and returned to wash again.

"These guys that don't half wash tickle me," Sloppy went on. And just then Ox laid a dirty sock across his back and Sloppy, cursing eloquently, followed "At 'Em" to the dipping vat.

Sphinx was the first of the regulars dressed, but he waited around until Tommy had on everything but his tie and collar and coat.

"Hurry up, runt," he commanded.

Tommy threw his coat around his shoulders, and the two started toward the dormitory. It was a crystal night, quiet save for the little noises of campus life, benign in the influence it cast. The two walked silently for the first fifty yards and then Tommy said softly, as if afraid to disturb the disposition of the night:

"Got a date to-night, I reckon?"

Sphinx nodded. "Wish I could get out of it. I don't feel like pirootin' around any."

They were silent again for a few more paces.

"It's a pretty night, though," Tommy mused. "Must be fun to have a woman out on a night like this. Moonlight and all that. Like you read about, ain't it?"

"I never read about," Sphinx replied. He was aware that his companion was lonely and envious. "I'd rather read about it to-night than to do it," he added.

Both were limping slightly. Sphinx tried to keep the memory of the afternoon from his mind, but it flooded back. He saw heels and legs and heads mixed in a jumble of humanity, and it somehow reminded him of the gruesome war pictures he had seen, with horses and dead men and cannon all mixed up together in a sort of nasty salad. He vaguely recalled the stands, the frantic thousands whom he had seen through a mist that afternoon, recalled their bellows of disgust when someone bungled and their roar of delight when someone got away. It was all vague, though, and the one picture he could not crowd from his mind was the Tate boy he had seen trampled, his face bleeding and his eyes ghastly. It was funny after a fashion, but not so very. They had carried him from the field.

"Wonder if that Tate bird got all right?" he asked.

"Which one? The one Ox stepped on?"

"Yeah."

"I don't know. He looked kinda peeked when they carted him off."

"Gosh, I'm stiff. I think I'll take a hot bath. Reckon that'll do me any good?"

"I don't know," Tommy grinned. "I never tried one."

II

Sphinx bathed with great deliberation. There was only one tub on his floor, and there were three ahead of him, but they stepped discreetly and deferentially aside when he stuck his head in the bathroom door.

"Who's next?" he asked.

"You are," the three replied like a chorus of well-trained supernumeraries in a home talent play.

"All right, if you say, here goes," Sphinx sighed as though it really hurt him more than it did them. He stripped the coarse bathrobe from his shoulders, but not without a wince of pain. "Goddam, that arm's sore."

"How about lettin' me rub it, Sphinx?" one of the boys petitioned.

"Oh, it'll be all right," Sphinx replied in his best offhand manner. "Just a little stiff." He walked naked to the door and, opening it, shouted out into the hall like an enraged operatic tenor, "Hiyah! Freshman! Git yo' rump in here this minit!"

A devilish-looking lad with swarthy arms appeared as if through the wall. "Where's yore cap, freshman?" Sphinx demanded.

The lad felt his head. "I guess I musta lost it, Mr. Harmon," he smirked.

"Musta lost it? Well, now, how in hell would you like to run and see if you couldn't find it?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll give you fen. One two three four . . ." He had just counted to ten when the freshman appeared, this time in appropriately humble headgear. "And don't let that occur again, freshman," Sphinx ordered.

"No, sir."

"Yes, sir."

"Yes, sir."

The two stood facing each other, each of them going through the part of the ritual he was expected to perform. Sphinx glowered, and the freshman trembled.

"Now, I want you to wash my back, freshman. And be easy." He got into the tub and knelt down like a cow. The freshman seized a brush and began to scrub with great vigor. "Don't rub so goddam hard, you lousie bushwhacker," the star ordered. The freshman winked and rubbed harder. "Lissen, I'll whale the hell out'n you in a minit."

"Yes, sir."

He leaned over luxuriously in the tub, and the freshman finished the job with speed and dexterity. Then the two went to the athlete's room.

"What tie, sir?"

"What tie, hell! Lay out that tie and don't be so cute, freshman."

"Yes, sir."

"Or maybe you gotta tie I'd like to wear."

"I think I have, sir," he said proudly.

"Well, chase down and get it. I'll give you ten."

On the count of eight the freshman was back with a gaudy string already shaped for the neck.

"That's not so bad."

"No, sir."

"Where'd you get it?"

"I bought it."

"Like hell. Do you reckon the guy you stole it from would care if I wore it?"

"Honest, Mr. Harmon, I bought it. It'll look good on you, sir."

Sphinx draped it over his B. V. D.'s and looked at himself critically in the mirror. "I reckon that will do," he soliloquized generously. "Now get my socks on. I got a date. Make it snappy."

Marion came by the time he had finished dressing, and at the sound of her whistle, followed by a bark of the horn, he limped down to her car.

"Whew, baby! You sure got on the perfume," he greeted.

"And take a look at that onsonble, if you please. Hell, you make me feel like a country boy." He climbed into the car, striking his knee on the edge of the door as he did. For a moment he held it in his hands and gritted his teeth. "Pardon the language, lady," he grinned a moment later. "But I gotta a charley-horse, or maybe it's the gout. It's sore as hell."

"You poor dear," she consoled, laying her hand on the aching knee. "Can't I do something for it?"

"Sure you can," he replied. "Let's get in motion. I crave action in a large way to-night, honey. I'm limp and liable, you might say. Free and all that."

He sighed as the car got on its way.

"You surely played a wonderful game this afternoon, dear," she began.

"Where was zat?" he asked innocently.

"Why, you funny! Against Tate, of course."

"Tate? Tate? Seems I have some recollection of playing Tate a time or two, madam." Sphinx seemed earnestly trying to recall. "My game's improvin', though, madam. I shot a thirty-eight on the first hole, you know. Golf's a great sport and all that." He rambled on, talking profligately and idiotically, either giving the impression or trying to frighten Marion into the impression that he had been struck on the head that afternoon. She looked at him suspiciously out of the corner of her eye, and he increased the tempo of his ravings.

"Sphinx," she said, "let me smell your breath."

"Is that nice?" He withdrew himself daintily to the far corner of the seat, then came back and kissed her resoundingly as they passed under a street light.

"Boob! You mustn't do that here."

"No? But, say, that reminds me, I would like to get a little corn, if you don't mind. A little rot-gut. What say? I feel so free, darlin'."

They were driving along the boulevard which led from the university to the lights of the city. Sphinx lay back on the seat, sprawled unceremoniously, and began to sing:

"Old Man Miller, where's your daughter?
We've come down to have some fun——"

"You don't need any corn, Sphinx, if you ask me."

"Aw, come on, baby," he begged. "I won't hurt you. Honest I won't. This is my night out. This is my night off. Drive by Ed's a minit and wait for me at the back door."

Down a side street of the section of Oil City reserved for Negroes they drove, stopping deftly at a house which looked just like all the rest. Sphinx was gone a few minutes and he came back singing raucously.

"Hip! Hip! Hooray!" he shouted when he had finished the song about Old Man Miller. He took a bottle from his pocket and placed it on the floor of the car. "Now, my love," he announced, "Pa's in a position to take you anywhere you want to go. I somehow have a cravin' for Bamboo Land and song and laughter. What say?"

"That suits me perfectly," she replied solemnly. "Sphinx," she went on earnestly, "you oughtn't to drink that stuff."

"Now, there'sh where you're exac'ly right, toodles. I oughtn't. I always said I oughtn't and that's what I've offen told the gover'ment. I offen says to the gover'ment—sort o' peaceful-like, with no hard feelin's or anything like that—I offen says to the gover'ment: I oughn' to drink this stuff but you can' git anything better these days and I says you oughtta be very mush ashamed of yourselfs and all that."

"You're a sweet boy, Sphinx. I wish you wouldn't do things like that."

"Like what?" His eyes were large with inquiry. "Like puttin' my feet on the dashboard? Now, lissin, honey, this is my night out, and there's no hard feelin's—that ish, there'sh no hard feelin's just yet," he added cryptically. "We're jus' gonna have fun and all that. Is really a nise night and lots a fun. You dunno what it means to me, toodles, to have a pretty girl like you to take me for a ride in a han'some car. It means more'n I can tell you right now—the condishun I'm in."

Bamboo Land lay in one of the suburbs of Oil City. Its appointments were alluringly tropical and its habitués were degenerate bookkeepers and soda skeets who had saved enough during the week to date telephone operators on Saturday nights. On holidays the place was most popular among people from the surrounding provinces who had come in to see what city life was

like. The place had good traditions, for in its earlier days it had been the tavern of the really swank, and those who frequented it now were people who thought the swank still came.

When Sphinx and Marion arrived it was already in a state of gala confusion. The tables had been placed as close together as possible, and on the floor the dancers were packed together like asparagus just out of the can. By the time they had checked their wraps, the dance had subsided, and everything was quiet as the head waiter led them through the swamp waist-deep in tables to a position near the orchestra. Sphinx was conscious as he walked across the dining-room floor that the tables came very frequently and that some of them jumped out at him and moved about queerly. He could also hear some of the diners whispering, "That's 'im." "Is it?" "Sure, I know him in his street clothes," and he was aware of speaking vaguely to several people he knew.

"Well, sister," he said when they were seated, "how's this for sport?"

"This is fine," she said, looking about to see if any of her sorority sisters were there with barbers.

"Now, what'll we have? I think I'd like some turtle. Have you any turtle, waiter?"

"I'm afraid not, Mr. Harmon."

"Mr. Harmon? Say, who the hell told you I was Mister Harmon?"

"You can't fool me," the waiter smiled resolutely. "I know you from your pictures. An' I saw you play on my day off last year."

"You did? Well, now, that's fine. Well, sir, this is my night off this year, ol' timer, and I'd like mightily to have some turtle."

"I'll see what can be done about it, Mr. Harmon."

"That's fine. Le's see, I didn't get the name."

"Richardson."

"Pleased to meetch Mister Richardson," Sphinx said, rising awkwardly and taking the waiter's hand. "Allus glad to meet any of my admirers. You see how it is. You can do me a great favor if you'll jus' get me some turtle. You know how it is, a man gets

awful tired of sow-belly all the time, don't 'e? Well, now, le's see if we can't have some turtle."

The evening wore on. Sphinx got what the waiter assured him was fresh turtle, and he seemed childishly happy over his triumph. They danced and sat down and danced some more. Sphinx got to flirting with a little black-haired telephone operator who shook herself in exaggerated fashion when she danced—"The hips with a smile," he said boisterously to Marion—but nothing serious came of it. He drank his corn from his coffee cup and was alternately hilarious and morose. After the eighth round they tired of dancing, and Sphinx grew a little more solemn but no less conversational.

"You know, daughter," he said gently to Marion, "I'd like to give you my philosophy of life. That's what the profs would call it. What I mean is what I'd like to do when I grow up."

She leaned forward eagerly, a smile of real interest and sympathy on her face. "And what is that, dear?"

"Well, you shee, ish thish way. Now wait a minit. Lemme say that over. Well," he began emphatically, bearing down on each word, "you see it's thish way. Now that's better. You see, i's this way. I'll be grown about nex' summer. And what I'd like to shugjest is that you and I make merry—just in a nice sort of way, you know."

"All right, Sphinx," she said, still smiling. "But why wait till next summer?"

"Well, now, that's the hell of it, Fanny. Fanny's jus' a name I call all the girls I like. No hard feelin's. They is no chance of fun around this dump. Everybody's solemn, dearie. Ever'body's scared of ever'body. You know how it is." He laid his big hand on her arm to express his appreciation of her understanding. "Sure you do. Well. Now, whut I'd like to sugjest is that we go off to the Canary Islands or summers else and make merry. How's that strike you?"

"I'm afraid it isn't quite feasible, Sphinx."

"Quite whut?"

"Quite feasible."

"Well, now, you know I hadn't thought of that." He seemed very much depressed.

"And then again it may be," she went on dreamily. "Not the Canary Islands, but some place just as good."

"Where's that?"

"Corpus."

"Corpus by the Sea," Sphinx said the words half reminiscently.

"Ever been to Corpus?"

He shook his head sadly.

"It's a nice place. I might spend next summer there with friends, and you could get a job as life guard. You'd make a handsome life guard."

Sphinx straightened up. "You've never seen me in a bathin' suit, have you?"

"No, but I'll bet you're good."

"I am, honey. Say," he went on suspiciously, "you're not stringin' me, are you?"

"No, dear. Why should I be? Can't you get a job down there?"

"Certainly." He seemed offended. "The colonel'll send me down if I tell 'im to. I'll be there. You jus' wait and see. I'm givin' you my word, ain't I?"

"We'll see."

"No," he protested, "there's no seein' to it. I'll be there, and it's a bargain. Shake."

They shook hands liturgically. Apparently that was all Sphinx's philosophy. He grew less garrulous and shortly excused himself for a few minutes. When he came back he was pale. They made their way through the squirming crowd a little later and stepped out into the coolness of the night.

"Sphinx," Marion said as she helped him into the car, "you're really a nice boy. Such a nice boy. I wish you wouldn't drink that stuff."

"I do too," he replied soberly. "I wish I hadn't." Then he put his arm around her and laid his head on her soft collar. "But, you see," he said wearily, "this's my night out."

TWENTY-FOUR

AFTER Homecoming the doctor, his mouth still wide in amazement at the generosity of alumni, set about lustily to build the stadium. It was not merely the stadium but what it signaled that consumed him; he regarded the huge steel and concrete coliseum which Willingham outlined as merely one of the first forts in the impregnable fortification of learning which he intended to erect. It would get the people into a habit of giving, and once they had the habit the rest would be comparatively easy. He addressed the Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimists, Lions, and Scalawags clubs, and at each place he felt more justified, for some curious reason, in asking these hard-headed business men for a stadium than he would have in asking them for a library. It just seemed more to the point and less embarrassing. And their response convinced him more than ever that Mr. Hawk had been right about what he called "the academic importance of a winning team." The university had in the biting, squealing Mavericks a spectacle which alone had the power to arrest the interest and attention of the city.

It would not do to trust solely in the doctor's eloquence. Even the doctor knew that. There must be a drive. A drive on the entire front. Accordingly, Colonel Willingham organized a Steering Committee for the Stadium Drive. On this committee sat the chancellor, the business manager, the chairman of the Board of Regents, the secretary of the alumni—a Mr. Leonard Pratt—and one representative from each of the four classes in the university.

It was a simple and beautiful scheme that they hatched. The alumni secretary must run down the pledges of \$50,000 that had been so hastily made in the hilarity of the last Homecoming; the chairman and the chancellor must have at the business men of the city with fireworks and heavy cannon if necessary; the business manager must direct the drive with the university, seeing to it that the indigent members of the faculty did their share when all of them wanted a raise in salary, and seeing to it also that the whole student body was seined again and again for any wealth it might conceal.

The thing started with a bang. On a given Friday Dr. Dickey spoke to the Scalawags Club, Johnny Tippy to a mass meeting of students in chapel, Colonel Willingham to the members of the faculty club, Leonard Pratt and a group of hired assassins to ten scattered Maverick Alumni clubs throughout the countryside. A mail-order campaign had been planned so that the letters reached all the alumni that same day. When all the noise had died down save the rattle of silver, there was something like \$50,000 of the needed \$175,000 in the university's coffers—this amount representing admitted pledges by alumni, enthusiastic promises by business men, and peppy oaths by the student body. At a special meeting of each of the four classes that same day the seniors agreed to raise \$4,000 by hook or crook, the juniors \$2,000 by the same way, the sophs an equal amount; the freshmen, being more numerous and younger, felt that they could do at least \$5,000. These various amounts were figured in to make the announcement of \$50,000 for the first day's returns.

From then on the university was a madhouse and the drive an epidemic, and no one paid any attention to figures. It was commonly agreed among the classes that, despite their pledges, the one class that raised the most was the best class, and the scramble started. Out of allowance money the seniors contributed a thousand of their pledge in cash and promised the rest in five monthly payments. All the other classes did the same thing, paying various amounts in cash. By this device it was found that all of them had overpaid their quotas; instead of cause for rejoicing, this gave the cue for rivalries. It was now to be seen which class was the most loyal.

Every device known even to churches was resorted to, and, of course, these devices for the most part merely absorbed the money already available. The freshmen gave a Kill Kare Karnival, charging a quarter admittance fee to a show For Men Only; those who bit on the old gag found a pair of trousers. But there were other features not so bad at the Karnival. At the main performance in the big tent, which in this case was the gym, the Fish girls put on a classic dance in nightgowns that was worth any soph's dollar. And even though a pack of outraged sophs had set upon the show For Men Only, wrecked it, and burned the trousers, the news that the Fish girls were going to

parade in a scant eight ounces of silken nothingness brought out a full house in the gym, and the proceeds of the big show put the freshmen more than a thousand dollars ahead of anything else on the campus.

Immediately the sophomores began a subscription campaign for *McClure's Magazine*, combing the suburbs of the city around the university first, and then extending their operations into the heart of the aristocratic and restricted areas. The bloods took the move most good-naturedly, and within a week the circulation of the journal had jumped up five thousand copies, and the sophs with their rake-off stood slightly ahead of the Fish. An agent of another publishing company, finding the students thus obsessed with the dissemination of culture, made a proposal to the juniors, on the three household magazines that his company published, and they began at once to canvass the town for sales and subscriptions. Full-grown boys decked in university colors stood on the downtown streets selling subscriptions, and when they explained to the hurrying throng what their purpose was, the response was invariably genial, save in the cases of those who had subscribed to *McClure's* the week before.

All in all the campaign was a frolic for the first few weeks, and the money raised exceeded all expectations. Then it settled down into a desperate rivalry, an epidemic of sacrifice to squeeze the last possible cent out for the stadium. The senior girls had a corset sale; the sophomore girls had a rummage sale in which they sold half their wardrobe to wide-eyed dealers in old clothes. The senior boys gave up smoking and chewing, and the junior girls gave up candies and sweets—until local dealers protested against boycott, and Colonel Willingham advised that the sacrifice be stopped. Then began a rage of volunteering for actual labor on the new stadium. In the end forty freshmen, thirty sophs, eighteen juniors, and four seniors had agreed to devote their entire summer to the enterprise as coolies.

II

In the luxurious welter of it all the doctor could scarce restrain himself. To Colonel Willingham he said one morning:

"I think I had better call a meeting of the Executive Com-

mittee, don't you?" And while the colonel rocked on his heels and started to reply out of the side of his mouth, the doctor got up from his desk, thrust his hands in his pockets, and walked around the office gayly. "This is just the time to lay before those fellows the great programme I have in mind. They ought to begin to see by now what we plan to do out here."

"I always say, 'Strike while the iron is hot,' " the colonel replied with a sort of reverent solemnity which indicated he thought he was quoting Shakespeare or Edgar Guest. He twitched all over and pulled his ear to show that he was being earnest. "It'd be a mighty fine scheme, Doctor."

"I think I'll do it, then," the doctor went on, as though he had just that moment decided to. "I think I'll just get them together, and we'll all sit down at the table, and I'll let them know what I intend to do around this place now that we've got things stirred up a bit."

The indorsement of the committee would after all be merely perfunctory. They could hardly object to a policy of expansion which would place their institution in the front rank of American universities. But the doctor knew that bodies of men in executive positions have a way of wishing to be consulted. Then, too, it somehow seemed important to have the meeting; it would give him the feeling of accomplishment. In that meeting he could build a papier-maché university for stage purposes and later replace it with one in mortar and stone. It was the same as playing dolls.

Having decided that the session was important, he began straightway to plan for it like an expectant mother. Everything was laid out with the greatest possible care. On the night of the meeting he started for the office fully half an hour before the time announced, carrying a new portmanteau and feeling a great deal like a prime minister. Whatever happened, he must keep an upper hand in the discussion. The prospect thrilled him immensely. It seemed rather naughty to be framing up on his own executive committee as though they were so many numskulls.

Across the marble floor in the great rotunda he walked, listening to the reverberation of his leather heels and pausing almost unconsciously to regard the immense portrait of Martha Sumner

which hung by a golden rope on one of the rounded walls. Even in oil the great benefactress seemed alive and bustling, her sharp eyes staring intently over the heads of all who entered the university's portals, searching their minds for obnoxious thoughts, warning them that they must bring nothing impure within. Her memory hallowed the place; it seemed even to cast the faint light which hung like a halo around the dome of the great rotunda. For a moment the doctor quivered within. What she had begun he must finish.

He unlocked the office with his own key and flashed on the lights. He looked about, squinting, as if surprised to find the office there; then walked to his desk and sat down. Without removing his hat or coat, he took the papers from his portmanteau and laid them on his desk as though placing an unspotted lamb on the altar. Then he began to distribute them about in neat little stacks, laying an index finger on each one and chanting aloud the item to which it referred:

"Effie Graham . . . Hawk School of Commerce . . . Hoffmyer School of Citizenship . . . Stadium . . . School of Medicine . . . Library . . . Engineering . . . Endowment Increase."

W. B. Carrington, an earnest and intensely coöperative young insurance broker, was the first to arrive. Shortly after him came the janitor, who brought in two extra chairs and adjusted the windows for ventilation. The doctor had not removed his hat when Carrington stepped into the office, and he felt the least bit undignified.

"Come in. Come in," he said more heartily even than he would have otherwise. He hastened to doff his hat and coat, he could not understand the trace of guilt he felt for being first at the office; it was as if the young insurance agent had caught him at something. "Well, you're on time, as usual."

"Good-evening, Dr. Dickey," Carrington replied. "Yes, on time." He nodded, his face abeam, as it always was when any one of his many good habits came in for special mention. The two shook hands, partly because it was their custom as brothers in the Lord, and partly because it gave them something to do. Then they both sat down.

"It's been a pleasant day for January," the doctor said warmly, wondering if there wasn't some good he could do with Carrington even before the others arrived.

"Yes, it has." The point was not controversial; even so, Carrington was not given to controversy, and he assented lustily.

"I like your climate here immensely," the doctor went on. He left for a moment the distinct impression that the climate of that locality was the exclusive property of W. B. Carrington, and then hastened on. "I believe we have here the location for one of the finest schools in the entire Southland. Great opportunity. Fine facilities. Plenty of railroads. Everything one could want, don't you think?"

"Yes, indeed, Dr. Dickey."

"You know, I've been thinking a lot lately, Carrington, of the marvelous opportunity we have here, not merely to drag along in the old way, but to be progressive, to build one of the greatest schools of the continent right here on this campus."

He would have gone on, and in the next wave of eloquence would have signified his intention to make Martha Sumner the greatest school in the hemisphere, but Simeon Hawk came bustling in, rubbing his hands together energetically, and by his very presence suspending conversation for the while.

"It's snippy out, brethren. Good-evening, Doctor. Howdy, Carrington. Am I late? You might know Carrington would be here right on the moment." He took off his coat and hung it on the rack in the chancellor's office, talking all the while about what he said to the wife about wishing spring would hurry up and come. He took his position next to the doctor and glanced suspiciously at the various stacks of papers on the executive desk. He fingered one or two of these before the doctor's movements brought him back to consciousness and reminded him that he was not in his downtown office.

"Well, I hear there's big business on to-night," he said buoyantly. "Well, bring it on, brethren. I'm ready for action."

"Well said! Well said!" Bishop Pendegrast had opened the door and now stood within, smiling in his official way at the three men. He was a solemn man, but the episcopacy had taught him the worth of a firm handclasp and a beaming smile, and though he was by temperament and physique singularly unsuited to either,

he could shake hands cordially, and he would on occasion break into a smile, which always seemed to distort and surprise his face. To-night he shook hands by turn with the three, then, as though relieved to be through with the period of joviality, he settled, with a wry and dour look upon his leather face, into a chair.

Willingham came in a few moments later with Milton Perry, the most handsome and influential banker in the financial district. Both were laughing heartily, and by the time they had passed their greetings around the room the doctor felt that it was about time to begin.

He stood as a signal for silence, but found it necessary to begin talking. "Now, gentlemen, if you can leave off your jokes for a season, I think we'll come to order. We have some very important matters to discuss here this evening. I am sorry the entire Executive Committee is not assembled."

Willingham looked around at the faces present and said, "Stapp is out of town, Doctor."

The doctor's demeanor was grave; he was judge, and the citizens had spurned his summons to jury duty.

"Well, that's unfortunate. But I believe we constitute a quorum, so, if Chairman Hawk will allow me, I'll state the business of the meeting."

"Go right ahead, Doctor, and take charge. I'll second anything you say."

Everybody laughed, and the doctor proceeded: "I was just saying to Brother Carrington before the meeting began"—he paused long enough to allow the other members to turn toward Carrington and see the flush of pleasure that crossed the young man's face—"that I believe we have here in this city a marvelous and almost unparalleled opportunity to found and consummate one of the greatest institutions of learning in the Western hemisphere.

"Now you've heard me say things like that before, I am sure. But I'm in earnest, gentlemen, I'm in earnest; and I have called you here to determine ways and means whereby we can bring this great thing to pass. In fact, I have certain definite plans which I should like to present to this executive committee, this chosen leadership of our great enterprise. I want you to consider these

items carefully, and I want the benefit of your seasoned judgment on each of them. There is nothing too great for us to accomplish, gentlemen."

He halted for a moment and glanced down at the papers on his desk. The committee looked at the papers, too, and the doctor felt just the slightest tremor of suspicion flit through the men about his desk. Breaking into a broad and ingratiating smile, he went on confidentially:

"If Chairman Hawk has no objection, I shall set forth what I have in mind and then turn the meeting over to you for a round-table discussion. First, I am pleased to announce that the Effie Graham gift of one million dollars for a special dormitory for girls is more nearly a fact each day. I was in conference only yesterday with Judge Buck of the School of Law, who assures me that the victory of Mrs. Graham in the Supreme Court of the state is now only a matter of time. Within a very short time I shall be able to announce definitely the Effie Graham donation. I may say in this connection that the architect has just laid on my desk the blueprints of this magnificent building. The estimated cost is in the general neighborhood of half a million, which, as you will see at once, leaves a sinking and maintenance fund of over half a million. Just what use shall be made of this additional sum is of course a matter for your decision later on.

"It gives me a great deal of pleasure also to announce, brethren—and here I digress and take up an item which I had intended holding for later consideration—that Mrs. Graham has expressed her willingness to give largely within the next few months to the endowment of the university. Dr. Swanson, our able university chaplain, has just returned from Okmulgee, where he was in conference with Mrs. Graham, and his report is most encouraging. I believe we may safely predict, gentlemen, that she will open our new campaign for an enlarged endowment with an initial offering of at least a million dollars."

There was silence for the space of a half minute; then Simeon Hawk whistled and slapped his knee. "Congratulations," he called heartily. "Congratulations, Doctor. Gentlemen, I believe we are getting somewhere."

The doctor hung his head modestly, as though a million were a mere bagatelle, and then went on enthusiastically.

"Now one of the items which I want you to give your most careful attention when the moment comes is this matter of endowment. We must build for the future. I have made a careful analysis of our needs both in the present and in the not distant future, and I have come to the reluctant conclusion that our present endowment is altogether inadequate. It will not support our school in decency and in order.

"We are working out plans at the moment with the General Education Board, whereby, if we raise seven millions, they will let us have three millions. This would increase our endowment to the sizable and quite nice sum of fifteen millions and lay the foundation for the great work in the production of Christian men and women which we must do in this institution. With your approval, I am prepared to begin at once this campaign. While we are on the point I should like Chairman Hawk to take charge and let the question be discussed."

Chairman Hawk took charge. The doctor saw at once that he "had 'em." Delight shone on their faces as they talked in terms of millions. But Bishop Pendegrast was wary.

"Mr. Chairman," he said, fiddling the huge emblem that hung from his watch chain, "I have no objection to a ten-million-dollar increase in our endowment, but I'm curious to know where it is coming from. Perhaps the doctor could tell us."

The doctor bit his lip. Just how many of his plans should he divulge? "I might reply by saying, 'O ye of little faith,'" he said. Carrington cackled at this, and the slight tension which the bishop's question had spread was broken. "I really can't say where I expect to get every dollar of it, gentlemen. If I could, a campaign would not be necessary. I am only saying that we must do things on a large scale or fail.

"Now, as for definite plans. I have every reason to believe that Mrs. Graham may be counted on for a million. I am confident, from my contact with the constituency during the summer and the recent demonstration of loyalty, that we could raise by subscription throughout the alumni at least another million. I am also of the opinion that the business men of this city could be persuaded to see the wisdom of devoting another million to the cause. Beyond that I am not prepared to go. But I can promise you this, gentlemen, I will not fail."

There was fire in his eyes when he said that, and it took very little more discussion to get the committee to empower him to raise the seven millions needed to get three millions more. There was something terribly exciting in being empowered to raise seven million dollars, and the doctor felt no qualms over the fact that he did not know just where he would get it—particularly if the plan to land Arthur King fell through. But all of these matters could be threshed out later. To-night he must get the enthusiastic approval of his executive committee.

"Gentlemen," he began again, "I have felt ever since I came to the chancellorship of this institution that we were in need of a definite and carefully executed policy of expansion necessary to meet the educational demands of the young men and women we serve."

No one knew what he meant by that, though he went on to say that the endowment itself was a step in this direction. But when he came down to brass tacks and proposed a School of Citizenship, a new Library, and a College of Music, they understood and readily agreed that the university was sadly in need of all of these.

"Now, of course, the great question is, how shall these various needs be met? I am frank to say that at the moment I do not know. I wish I did. I would be a very happy man if I could say just where we might turn. But I should be a very miserable man if I did not recognize the existence of these great needs and if I did not devote myself without stint or limit toward meeting them. What I am particularly anxious that you gentlemen do is to declare the need and authorize me to exert myself to meet it."

That was a fair proposition, they all agreed. They were glad enough to delegate the task, and their willingness the doctor construed as a distinct executive triumph. It was true that Colonel Willingham nearly upset the chancellor's exuberance by bluntly announcing toward the close of the meeting that only \$100,000 of the necessary \$175,000 was actually in sight for the new stadium, but Dr. Dickey quickly silenced the alarm by showing a blueprint of the structure and by dwelling at eloquent length upon the splendid spirit with which the student body had responded. He suggested adjournment before the

colonel should let some other cat out of the bag to run rampant through the legs of the committee.

Shortly after ten the meeting formally adjourned, and from the talk which followed, the doctor realized that he had scored a hit of the first order. There was a new and bustling enthusiasm among the members of the central committee. And why not? In a single evening he had promised to raise ten million dollars and found three new schools.

It was of course the least bit disconcerting to think, as the doctor did for a fleeting second, that absolutely nothing had been accomplished. The university was no nearer a fifteen-million-dollar endowment than it had been at eight o'clock that evening. And yet, there was new life in the chancellor; he had named an objective which he must either reach or be slaughtered in the attempt. He had aimed high. And now that the project had been announced within the inner circle, it all seemed poignantly possible. That was the strange and fascinating thing.

When the last lingering member had left he rose and paced the floor, surveying impatiently the great prospectus which challenged him from the wall. He felt eager to begin his labors at once, begrudging the interruption of a night's sleep. Yet, he reflected, if he was to put over his herculean programme he must care for his health. So he turned out the lights, left the door for the waiting janitor to lock, and walked slowly and thoughtfully home.

TWENTY-FIVE

HAVE you heard the news?"

Malcolm Leeds slammed the door to the Rawlings apartment and looked wildly at Janet. He was out of breath.

Janet looked up from her work at the writing table as though she had resigned herself to the disagreeable but not impossible task of entertaining a maniac. "No," she said.

"Well, you needn't act that way about it," Malcolm retorted, dropping into a chair. Her calmness infuriated him. All the splendor of his message was gone now, and he would wait until he was good and ready to tell it. He might even go off without telling it. . . .

Janet fingered the freshman papers on her desk as if loath to leave them and turned to the one-time editor. "What has happened, Malcolm?"

"Teddy King has given the university a stadium. Gave \$50,000 just when it looked like there wasn't a chance of raising the money. They're going to call it the King Stadium." He said the words slowly and waited for her reaction.

"Well, we needed one," she replied. "Didn't we?"

"Oh, hell, yes; of course we needed one. But don't you see the humor of it, the incongruity of it, Janie? Where's your sense of humor gone to?"

"It isn't awfully funny, or it doesn't seem so to me, at any rate. It seems quite logical."

Malcolm sighed and threw one leg impatiently over the arm of his chair.

"I think you're hopeless. It's just such as you that make college life what it is to-day. Utter indifference to everything. Why, look how funny it is. Here comes a consumptive little millionaire who couldn't even blow up a football. He lands on the campus, and all the frats rush him and all the girls go crazy about him. He's easily influenced, and along comes the stadium drive. Just when everything appears to be without any prospect of success, a bunch of athletes and Doc Leveridge corner him and scare him into giving a stadium. He can't play in it. He

can just furnish the public a place where they can witness gladiatorial spectacles and get his name in bronze and be regarded as a benefactor as much as old lady Martha Sumner. It's a damn wonder they don't change the name of the school again and call it King University."

Helen poked her head timidly out of the bedroom door, holding a dressing gown across her throat. "What did I hear you-all say about Teddy King?" she asked.

"I thought you'd prick up your ears when you heard that if you were within a mile of here," Malcolm blustered. "Why, he's just given the university a new Science Building and a new Library and endowed a fund for struggling poets. They're going to name the Library for Abe Lincoln, the Science Hall for Francis Bacon, and the sinking poets' fund for Perse Shelley."

"Oh, isn't that adorable!" Helen cried and came on into the room. "I knew he would do something great. He told me he would."

Malcolm buried his head in his hands and groaned. "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," he muttered. "Janie, you tell her. I haven't the heart."

Helen looked up bewildered. "Is Teddy hurt?" A look of ghastly fear crossed her face.

"Oh, my God, no!" Malcolm explained. "He's given the university a stadium so at least fifty men a year can get hurt. That's all."

Gradually the girl's face cleared. "A stadium! A stadium! Oh, boy! That's something like. When did he do it?"

"To-day. I've just come to bring the news."

"Well, I think he's just too precious for words," Helen trilled. "Just think—I'll bet we have a box in it."

"No doubt you will," Malcolm growled. He was obviously disgusted with Helen's behavior and got up to go. "I think I'll be moving along, girls, if you will excuse me. I see you can't hang around here unless you give stadiums to universities. I want to see McKnight."

"So you'll know what to think?" Janet taunted.

"I know just exactly what I think," the young reformer countered. "And I don't mind telling you a damn bit. I think this

school's gone hog-wild over athletics and athletes. It might just as well be closed after Thanksgiving and opened up again the next September for a spell. Athletics! Athletics! Everything's athletics. No conception of the university as a place to think. What have you got? You've got a bunch of roughnecks strutting around the campus like bantam cocks, like they owned the damn place—letting freshmen feel their thighs and showing young girls how they tackle. It's getting damned disgusting."

He stopped abruptly and looked violently at the wall. "And then, to cap it all, here comes a little runt that's not dry behind the ears and gives the school a concrete stadium. It's all horribly, grotesquely funny."

Janet inspected him coldly. She said nothing for a moment, and Malcolm thought he had some chance of getting out of the room before she did. Her words reached out and drew him back like a tongue of flame from an oil fire.

"I've been wondering, Mal, if the way Sphinx stands with the chancellor's daughter hasn't given you a great many of your ideas on athletes and athletics."

"That's absurd, Janet, and you know it. You knew I thought the athletes were getting to run this school long before I ever met Marion."

"Yes, I know. But you seem to me to have become a great deal more gravely concerned over athletics since you and Sphinx fell into competition."

Malcolm bit his lip and later his tongue. He wanted very much to stick out his tongue at Janet and run. "Well, you're right this far. It's a damn cinch I can't compete with a bird like the Mighty Sphinx. Not when the Old Man's against me and when he's for Sphinx as strong as horseradish. But it all comes back to what I am saying: there's nothing in this school but athletes and athletics."

He finished the sentence desperately and started for the door. At that moment the bell above the door clamored—two longs and a short. Helen ran for the bedroom, and Janet sighed. A moment later Teddy King appeared.

"Pardon me," he said softly. "Is Helen in?"

"Yes," she called. "Come in, Teddy. I'll be out in a minute."

Teddy stepped into the room and looked timidly about. He

was a lad of small and frail stature; to his friends he had the figure of a dauphin; to those who envied him his Cadillac he had the figure of a runt. He was attired in the most collegiate mode of the day; he wore no hat, and his tie looked like a huge trail of blood down the front of his shirt.

"Have a chair, Teddy," Janet invited. "Malcolm was just going."

"Oh, I do hope I'm not intruding," the young millionaire piped. There was something boyish and at the same time girlish in his manner. "I just wanted to see Helen for a few moments."

Malcolm moved toward the door but could not resist a few words.

"I hear you gave the university a stadium to-day," he accused.

"Why, no, not exactly," King replied. "I made a donation, or whatever you call it."

"They're going to name it for you," Leeds persisted.

"They can if they want to."

"Do you ever play football?"

King smiled wanly and reached for a cigarette. "No, I don't. Do you?"

"No."

"You watch it, don't you?"

"He hasn't missed a game in three years," Janet confided.

"And he adores it."

"I like it," King said simply.

Helen came out, and Malcolm, feeling that he was both bored and about to witness something intimate, something like the mating of birds, stalked out.

"Fine tobe," he muttered to himself. "Imagine *that* giving a stadium. That's what things have come to in this university. I'd like to wring his young neck just on general principles."

He walked hurriedly in the direction of Professor McKnight's house. McKnight, in common with a great many of his colleagues, lived on the back of a lot where he hoped some day to erect an attractive home. For the time being his home was a small, unprepossessing garage. Just across the alley lived Professor Finch. He had already acquired the money to build his home and could be seen now in the back lot milking a cow. He was a bucolic man who placed his hand on Betsy's hip and

shoved her about and into position like an experienced hired man. He looked up suspiciously as Malcolm approached McKnight's garage.

McKnight sat rocking in his front room, with three books open on the floor and another in his lap with a pile of papers. He looked up inquisitively when Malcolm knocked and without ado told the young man to come in and be seated. Then he laid the book and papers on the floor ceremoniously and rummaged about the cluttered mantel.

"I believe you prefer cigarettes," he said, handing Leeds a crumpled package which he found behind a faded wooden picture of a Mexican saint. "If you don't mind, I'll smoke my pipe."

Malcolm took the cigarette in silence; he preferred silence to saying something very silly, and everything he said around McKnight seemed open to the greatest scrutiny. Even now the professor was tamping the tobacco in his pipe with his little finger and looking at him in that quizzical manner which annoyed Malcolm beyond words; yet, he reflected, he often tried to adopt it in talking to men younger than himself.

"What's new?" the professor asked simply.

"Teddy King's given the university a stadium," Leeds blurted out, and watched the older man narrowly.

"Who's Teddy King?"

"Oh, he's a consumptive little soph. Came here from St. Louis just after the fall term started. He's a nephew of old man Arthur King. You know."

McKnight sucked in his cheeks and chewed them thoughtfully. He seemed lost in a trance of thought, and Leeds imagined that the silent agitator of the faculty must be thinking of all sorts of dire things he could do to stop the gift. But when he spoke again it was only to ask one of his simple, maddening questions:

"How much did he give?"

"Fifty thousand dollars. They had already raised the rest."

"Fifty thousand? Is he of age?"

"No, but I've already investigated all of that," Malcolm said proudly. "His uncle is not his guardian. The old man simply invited the boy down to live with him. I'm not sure that's true,

but, anyway, the kid was granted the privilege of giving at least fifty thousand a year to some charitable cause before he reached the age of twenty-one, providing he gave it without pressure. The stadium is this year's charitable cause, and of course there was no pressure."

McKnight searched his pockets for a match and accepted one from Leeds before he spoke again.

"It looks as though the chancellor might be in line for some real money. What does old man King think of the gift?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," Malcolm said, a little indignant that he had been asked a thing he did not know. "He's sort of off, you know."

"He was at the Thanksgiving game. Did you know that?"

"No." The word began as a question and rose to an exclamation.

"Well, he was. He had the time of his life. I watched him." McKnight blew out a thin vapor of smoke and grinned. "There may be something back of all this."

Malcolm wanted to say that there "was something rotten in the State of Denmark," but he checked himself; McKnight taught Shakespeare, and he was probably tired of hearing that quotation. Instead he sat quietly and tried to look intelligent and very thoughtful.

"Do you know anything about Arthur King?" the professor asked at last.

"Not much."

"Well, if I were a young man and wanted to perform a real service for the university—" he paused and grinned to indicate that he had no intention of being a young man or performing a service—"I think I should find out something about King. He'll pay knowing about. You mark my word, that man's going to have a lot to do with this university before it's much older."

"I doubt it," said Malcolm and was so much engaged by the bluster of dissent that he forgot just why it was he doubted it. The professor waited for him to go on, and the young man continued at last: "I don't know, but I think he's an atheist and totally out of sympathy with everything civic. I don't believe the doctor could ever land him."

"Perhaps not. He's queer," McKnight agreed. "But the

chancellor's canny. There can be no doubt of that. I happen to know something of King."

He made another of his dramatic pauses, lighted his pipe, and immediately let it go out before he said anything.

"An uncle of mine used to know him out in New Mexico. That was years ago, but King has always fascinated me and I've kept an eye on the fellow. He's queer, to be sure, but that doesn't explain everything. In the first place, I'm not so sure that he's as queer as he seems. It may be a part of his pose, all this business of not taking part in civic enterprise, of living secluded and apart, of driving to the bank once a week and holding hurried conferences and then driving home.

"I don't know, but I suspect that Arthur King really isn't very crazy. And suppose he is? There still remains the question as to what makes him crazy. I do know that he's a man who bears grudges very heavily. He never forgets what he considers an injustice. My uncle tells me that he used to brood a great deal, even as a ranchman. Always has, in fact, and I happen to know that he has a rather deadly hatred for certain of our own citizens.

"Now, Dickey isn't going to let any gross of millions go to waste simply because it happens to be in the hands of a crazy man. Dickey will just find out what the man's crazy about."

Apparently the professor had finished. He had a way of starting a tale, hinting at its conclusion, and stopping in the middle of it; and though Malcolm primed him with questions it was without result.

In the silence which followed, the young man fell to brooding deeply over the low estate to which the university had fallen by erecting this latest monument to Philistinism. And then a diabolical scheme occurred to him—occurred with the suddenness of a Texas norther—and he could scarcely keep the belying look of ecstasy off his face as he arose to go.

He ate a hurried dinner at his fraternity house, taking no part in the repartee which the brothers were rehearsing for use the next time there were co-ed guests in the dining room, and when he had finished he went immediately to the room of Amon Kibler. Kibler, not of the Aryan race, was not within the sacred bond. The two talked earnestly and softly until half-

past eleven, and when Malcolm returned to the house his plan was formed in all its glory. Ever since he had been relieved of the editorship of the *Lasso* he had felt thwarted. Now the prospect that he should become an influential factor in student life again thrilled him enormously. It was as though he played some strategic part in a drama of high deeds and gore. He had laid a plot that night which would shake the very walls of the university.

And it was a really gorgeous plot, founded upon the best precepts of modernity. . . . For a moment or so before dropping into a fitful sleep he even convinced himself that he was planning the thing for the academic and ethical welfare of the university, but always the thought of the fun he would have got the better of him.

TO CHANCELLOR DICKEY the gift of Teddy King seemed nothing short of a godsend. He rejoiced not only that the stadium drive should have so glorious a finale, but he was also quick to see the possible access which Theodore's gift gave him to the immense fortune of Arthur King. Though he could not really believe, even in his feverish optimism, that the arc containing the gold was any nearer to capture, there did seem to be something mystically important about the old man's nephew donating a stadium.

Of course, the stadium itself was not to be despised. The fact is that, despite all the corset sale and the stirring deeds of sacrifice on the part of the students, the success of the drive was in doubt until Teddy's gift. The alumni gave sixty thousand, the business men came across with thirty-five thousand more, and the students managed at last to raise fifteen. But that was the end. Only when Teddy, at the repeated invitation of Colonel Willingham and Doc Leveridge, agreed to supply fifty thousand did the huge coliseum become anything more than a blueprint.

It was only natural that the doctor, taken aback by so great a gift from one of the students, should summon the young man to his office to thank him.

"Well, young man," he said when Teddy appeared, "I think you have done a splendid thing for the institution."

"Oh, yes," the young man replied carelessly, reaching into his pocket for a cigarette before he realized where he was. "Everyone has been very nice about it."

"I was wondering what your uncle would have to say about it. Does he approve?"

"Well, not exactly, but you see he really hasn't anything to say 'bout it. The money happens to be my own."

"Yes, of course," the doctor hurried on, "and I don't mean to be prying into your business. You understand that as chancellor of the university it was simply my duty to inquire."

"That's all right," Teddy said generously. "No hard feelings."

The two sat facing each other over the doctor's desk. The doctor seemed to be thinking hard.

"You say you don't think your uncle would approve?"

"I don't suppose he would. No, sir. But I don't see what difference it makes."

"Oh, it really doesn't make any at all."

The two were silent again for a moment; then the young millionaire added voluntarily, "Uncle's queer, you know."

"Really?" The doctor showed surprise.

"Yes, awfully."

"I should like to meet him, anyway."

"Well, that would be hard," Teddy sighed. "He'd think you were after his money."

The chancellor laughed jovially, just to show that any intent to get Arthur King's money was so remote as to be ridiculous. "Well, I hope you'll give him my regards and say that we appreciate what his nephew has done."

"All right," Teddy said. "I'll do that. But it won't do any good."

That closed the interview and left the doctor thinking through firmly squinted eyes. If the programme he was about to put on foot succeeded he must count on a generous donation from Arthur King. And by a strange and resolute process of wish-thinking he began that moment to count on the fervent support of the man who had never given a cent to civic enterprise and who said that the churches were full of hypocrites and scoundrels. He saw with clear vision his programme blossom into full flower, and from then on all of his plans were made just as though King had already given his millions.

At last the doctor had his teeth into his job. At last he felt roaring within him the old fire of determination, fanned by the bellows of ambition for the sake of a great cause. And he knew intuitively that when those fires roared there was nothing which he could not wither into submission or ignite from his own enthusiasm. Sitting there in his office he knew very really that he would build a great university. For the first time he knew it, and he glanced at the prospectus which hung on the wall of his office. Suddenly it became vivid. The building's grew from splotches of color to mortar and stone, the trees from unsightly

daubs to verdant, living things—he could even see the breeze troubling them ever so gently. It was his mount of transfiguration; with his own hands and his own blood he would build the tabernacles there. . . . It was all as real as the vision of John on the Isle of Patmos; he saw seven golden buildings with seven golden columns in the front of each; and in the midst of the seven buildings stood a white mustang with feet of gold, and on the horse sat the figure of a man; in his hand was a two-edged sword, and in his mouth were seven candles for the seven arts, and on his raiment were written in silver letters the words, "In the name of education." . . .

II

That night he had planned to call on Stephen Buck. In a way he wished he had not made the engagement, for now that the vision wonderful had been vouchsafed him, the splendor of his position dazzled him and made the ordinary amenities of life look tawdry. He would have much preferred to stay at home with a pad and pencil and sketch even in rough form the gorgeous programme he and Arthur King must put over. But he could think of no good reason for disappointing the judge; he had not been so well that spring. Besides, the Effie Graham case was not yet settled, and on the whole it seemed really wise to humor his friend.

The first part of the evening proved tedious. Stephen told him one story he had told before, and the doctor found his mind skipping here and there over the pinnacles of the future. Then, too, the judge coughed a great deal, and either expectorated or needed to expectorate frequently. "It's just a hang-over from my cold," he explained apologetically, but try as the doctor did he could not help being annoyed. He had that uncomfortable feeling of superior refinement which made him seem a lily to himself; the feeling came from the marvelous secret which nestled in his bosom, and he knew that sooner or later it would—so strangely like murder—come out. At last the judge, tired of his own stories and after a few moments of silence, asked—the doctor thought later—suspiciously:

"What's all this I hear about the new stadium, Horace?"

"It's a fact," Horace replied, thrusting his thumbs into the armholes of his vest before he was conscious of it. "Yes, sir, Steve, it's a fact. You saw it in the papers, didn't you?"

"Why, yes," the judge replied indifferently. "I noticed it. But what's back of all this?"

"Back of it? Why, nothing, Steve. Nothing at all." The doctor was faintly alarmed. He saw that his secret was coming out by interrogation and not by announcement unless he deflected the talk to other subjects.

"Not a part of a larger programme, or anything like that?" Stephen Buck fell to coughing, and the ordeal of it took up so much of his time and energy that he seemed little inclined to press the question further. When he had quieted again, the doctor went on, talking casually:

"No, we just had to have a stadium, Steve. That was all there was to it. So I went right after it for all I was worth, and now we've got it. It'll be a great help to the school. You've no idea how this enterprise has enlisted the interest of the business men.

"Judge," he continued, addressing his companion to forestall interruption, "I've got something I want to ask your advice about." He took out a new cigar, lighted it, and puffed on it long enough to make the pause dramatic. "I'm just now getting into a position to do some really great work around here. Do you know, I believe we can build here one of the greatest institutions of learning anywhere in America. Our opportunity is perfectly awe-inspiring." He waxed on as though he were addressing the Executive Committee, and before he had finished the judge was smiling imperceptibly, and the doctor showed some trifling embarrassment. He concluded on a practical plane: "And just to give you an idea of what I have in mind, who do you suppose I'm going out to land?"

"You're not getting ready to ask me for a donation, are you?" the judge feinted.

Dr. Dickey chuckled. He was glad to have a chance to chuckle, for he wanted to laugh gleefully over his quarry. "Oh, no, Judge. Not you. You're easy. This man is hard. So hard no one else has ever tried to land him, in fact. But that's the kind I was made to get."

"Well, I can't guess, unless it's old man Grant of Grant & Grant."

"Oh, he's small fry." The doctor waved his hand cavalierly. "We've got to have a man of immense wealth to build the school we need here."

The business of making the judge guess seemed rather childish to the doctor, even in his playful state of mind. Yet he kept silent and watched his host wrinkle his brow. For a moment the thought flashed through his mind that Stephen was avoiding the name of the man. . . .

"I give up," the judge said at last. "I can't think of a man too big for you, Horace."

"Well," said the doctor, shifting in his chair self-consciously, "what do you think of old Arthur King? Do you think I can make a killing there?"

It was perhaps because the doctor had been watching the judge's face so eagerly that he saw the havoc which the name wrought. For a second the muscles of the judge's face caught and held; there were traces of the pleasant smile which distinguished him, but the reality had gone out of it, and he seemed to be wearing a distorted mask. Then he bent double in a violent spell of coughing, and when he had recovered he repeated the words as though to convince himself that he had heard correctly:

"Arthur King! A killing there."

Dr. Dickey was feeling very uncomfortable. His own jubilation had left him, and he shifted in his chair and sat very still until the judge spoke again:

"Arthur King! I can't believe it, and yet I was afraid. How strange. My dear Horace, would you take that man's money?"

The question was flat, unequivocal, and the doctor felt that his friend was looking at him accusingly. Bewildered, he answered: "I don't know, Steve. Is there something wrong with King? I don't know anything about him except what I've heard. I'll admit that hasn't been so pleasant, but I suspect most people are jealous of his money. If he has an immense fortune which I could put to good use, why, well—I don't know. What about him, anyway?"

The judge was smiling now. Just what the smile meant the

doctor could not quite determine; there seemed, however, to be some genuine amusement in it, and the doctor would have felt better if there had not been something a little sardonic in it, too.

"I'm afraid, Horace, that I showed more emotion than I really felt when you mentioned King. Of course, I don't blame you for trying to land him, as you say. I see your position. He's the one man of any consequence around here upon whom you could rely unceasingly for funds. I suppose we might even say that if a great school is to be built here, Arthur King must build it—through you," he added hastily. "But there is something a little incongruous and a little depressing, if I may say so, about you, a minister, a gentleman, and my friend, out to land King.

"It's a long story, Doctor, but I think I ought to tell it to you. In the days when men were men and Billy the Kid was only a child in Kansas, there was a violent quarrel out in West Texas and New Mexico. That quarrel was between two ranchmen, one by the name of Slade and the other by the name of King. I don't know just how the row started. No one liked King at the time, I do know that. He had come out from the East. He ran everything on a businesslike basis, just as though he were an industrialist, and pretty soon his place came to be known as the Rocking Chair Ranch among the cowpunchers. He had all the trimmings of a gentleman, but I think everyone suspected that there was nothing but trimmings there.

"I think it all began when King discovered some of his steers with the ES brand on them. King—and this was characteristic of him—sat down and wrote Slade a letter about them. I don't think of anything he could have done to make himself more cordially despised among the ranchmen. Slade of course paid no attention to the letter, and King decided to take the case to court.

"That was futile, and it only meant the beginning of a feud between the two ranches. And yet the cowboys took very little part in it, for the simple reason that King's men didn't like him well enough to shoot for him. Of course, King couldn't prove anything in court, and the case went against him. Things went on from bad to worse between the two fellows, until one day Slade discovered that some of his cattle were dying from poison.

"He made a tour of his water holes and discovered that most of them had been polluted. There were charges that some of King's half-breed Mexicans had been seen on the Slade holdings, and everyone jumped to the conclusion that King had resorted to this means of evening up his claim. Edgar Slade was mad as a hornet, and the whole country was up in arms about the thing. Slade rode to the King ranch, but King wouldn't come out and fight. He left the country that night and went to another ranch of his out in Colorado.

"Everybody thought that would quiet things down. There were some shootings, but not many, and most folks thought the two had called it even. Then one day Slade got notice that a man named King was filing suit against him for having stolen five thousand acres of land. Slade couldn't make heads or tails of the charges, and all the boys said he was bewildered beyond words.

"It just happens that I had returned from law school about the time the case came up. I was back in Tascosa. I don't know just exactly why. I suppose it was because I didn't know any place else to go. One day while I was there Ed Slade rode into town and came around to the saloon and hotel where I was.

" 'Steve,' he says, 'I hear you're a lawyer.'

"I admitted I was and asked him what was the matter. He pulled out the notice he had from the court and showed it to me.

" 'This looks awful queer to me,' I said. 'Let's have a talk about it.' We went in and had a drink and a talk. I was young but Slade said he wanted me to take the case. We sat there and figured for a long time. Then I went out and looked over the holdings and got all the facts together I could. When the case came up in Amarillo, I managed to show the judge that King had with malice dug up an old claim and was simply trying to get revenge on Slade for trying to whip him.

"The case was appealed, and it went on at Austin. I fought it right straight through, though, and got it thrown out of court at last. That was the beginning of my legal career. In Amarillo they shot at me twice but never managed to hit me, somehow. In Austin I saw Arthur King. He didn't have the nerve to come to Amarillo, but he was at Austin. He was nice to me for a while, but soon he got pretty mean, and before the trial was

over he tried to buy me off. We had words, to put it mildly, and I guess we've never cared much for each other since.

"That's about the whole of it, except that Slade died a few years later, and King seemed to transfer all of his hatred to me. Then, too, he was always a high-strung fellow and somewhat introspective, and he brooded a lot over his unhappy experiences with the ranching industry. They found him nearly frozen on his Colorado ranch one winter, and that seemed to undermine his stamina more than ever.

"Well, of course they hit oil on the south part of his land a few years ago. Right at the point where it joined the old Slade holdings. King made enough; that's how he made his millions, but he lost those five thousand acres he might have had if I hadn't fought so hard against him in the courts. I suppose those five thousand acres have produced ten million dollars' worth of oil in the last six or seven years, and it all hasn't improved King's disposition in the least.

"In fact, they tell me he's getting more crabbed all the time. He never goes anywhere, except to the bank. And it's my conviction, Dickey, that he's a very mean man. If he ever gave anything for your university, it wouldn't be for any good reason. You can mark my word on that."

Dr. Dickey could not move when the judge finished. He seemed drugged into complete inaction by the narrative; it had engrossed his attention, and only slowly did he come back to a consciousness where he could think as clearly as he had been thinking all afternoon. The thought glimmered in his mind that perhaps Judge Buck had exaggerated Arthur King's evil ways, that the man was not as bad as he seemed. He fanned the thought with Christian charity, and it glowed into a brilliant red coal which warmed his mind and sent life once more through his body.

"Too bad. Too bad," he consoled. "Has King ever done anything to get revenge?"

"Not yet. Nothing to speak of. But I'm getting old. I can't go on fighting and being on my guard all my life, you know."

It seemed inappropriate to say anything just now about the Effie Graham battle; it had resulted in some bitterness itself. The doctor chatted as freely as he could for another half hour

and started toward home. He could not shake the judge's narrative from his mind, but he kept telling himself that he ought to save Arthur King, that he ought to do something with the man. Wouldn't it be great if he could reconcile the two lifelong enemies? The prospect fattened him with pride. King was probably a good man at heart. Besides, if his money could be put to good purposes . . . What if his life had not been all it should have been? That was no reason why the fortune he had accumulated should be allowed to go by forfeiture. . . .

WELL, Shep, it looks like a hard winter."

Stephen Buck returned to his chair as soon as the doctor left; he sat erect and very rigid, staring at the cluttered mantel with eyes of steel. Shep got up on his haunches, barked softly, and eyed his master curiously.

"A hard winter," the judge repeated vaguely, as though talking partly to himself, partly to the dog, and partly to an invisible audience of furies. Shep whined and brushed the hearth with his tail, then stuck his wet nose under the judge's hand. Almost unconsciously the judge's hand moved over the smooth fur of the dog's head, stopping to feel the queer, sharp bump in the middle of it. "You know, I believe Senator Vest was right," he said, just as though Shep knew Senator Vest from Senator Borah; "you're the best friend I've got, you old bastard." He shook the dog's head affectionately and then leaned forward and looked deeply into his eyes. "Perhaps there's more than a genetic relationship between us and the lower animals. Suppose there's a psychic kinship, shall we say. What do you think of that?"

Shep blinked as though he were thinking very deeply about the probability; then, just at the moment he seemed actually about to speak, he sneezed delicately, walked off, and lay down.

The judge leaned back and stared again at the cluttered mantel. Everything looked as confused as the Chinese idol, the glass clock, the gourd cup, the Mexican pottery plate, the old six-shooter, the picture of his daughter. Just like the cluttered mantel. He smiled to himself—whether in bitterness or amusement he could not tell. Then, because he could not check himself, he began to think feverishly, chiding himself one moment for what he had thought the moment before, then thinking it all over again.

It was really fatuous, he told himself, to let the doctor's mention of Arthur King upset him so. A spell of coughing set his heart to beating wildly; possibly it was because he did not feel well that he showed such delirious concern over what

Horace had told him. He remembered when as a child he had fallen ill with pneumonia and as he lay in delirium his mother had brought his baby sister to the bed. To him in his fever it looked as though a snake had wound itself around his sister's neck, and he had started up with terror and anxiety. When he got well his mother had showed him the baby dress; what he thought was a snake was only tatting. Possibly that was the way things were now. Tatting that looked like snakes.

Yet there was something sinister, abnormal, and shamelessly funny about his friend's avowed intent to "land Arthur King." Judge Buck had the feeling that he was looking upon all sorts of freaks and deformities in a sideshow at the circus; things that should never have been seen, much less exhibited.

Memory stirred his thoughts into a whirling, muddy pool. The angel that troubled the waters. It was partly because he could not escape this black angel and partly because he thought he could straighten out the pool into some kind of clear current that he got up from his chair and walked to the section of the bookcase where he kept his diary. With a small key he unlocked the case and lifted three ledgers from the shelf. These he placed on the floor in front of his chair, and then sat down again.

He always felt self-conscious when he got out his diary either to read or to write. Poets, he remembered Nietzsche's having said, are the crassest of all men, for they sell their emotions. There was something a little vulgar about putting down one's emotions in writing, even for private consumption, but then, too, there was something thrilling about being Homer to the soul.

The first entry he read was that of August 19, 1918:

I am appointed dean of law at Martha Sumner. How queer and restful it will seem to be a dean. And how incongruous! Shall I teach young men to be lawyers when I despise the profession with vehement loathing? I shall. And why? Because, like every man of moderate intelligence, I want a sinecure, a living for which I do not have to slave.

He looked up from the page and smiled resignedly. The comment following the entry interested him; it was as though he

had written it prophetically to chide himself for his present serious-mindedness:

What amazing scope of importance our smallest problems take on! The annoyance of Arthur King, the persistence with which he has plagued me, the frequency with which I am convinced he has with his own money hired expert Eastern lawyers to battle cases against me when he had no interest in these cases save a hatred for me—all of this is not poignant to anyone but myself. It is not even the stuff of which tragedy is compounded. Yet to me it is important, tremendously important, and I get little solace from the fact that the enmity of Arthur King and Stephen Buck will mean nothing to the general life of the human race.

Once started on King, he had hardly ever been able to stop writing. Perhaps that was because he never talked about the man, but only wrote. He had set down an analysis which, with minor changes, had been repeated a hundred times in the diary:

King is mad—as mad as the Prince of Denmark. And he has that curious brand of mania which forever leaves observers in doubt. Is he mad or is he merely feigning madness? they ask. Of course the average American cannot quite bring himself to believe that a man of wealth is wholly mad; that sort of thinking goes against the grain of our dearest prejudices. But if Arthur King were a pauper, he would be in the asylum, instead of released to roam the prairies like a locoed coyote. His fixation is that of a hatred for me, a fixation which he has transferred to me since the death of Slade. The only true emotion he has in life is one that comes from doing me harm. . . .

Almost carelessly he flipped through the pages of the ledger he held in his lap until some item picked at random caught his eye:

Anne came home to-day. I hardly knew her. She is marvelously pretty—an aristocrat like her mother. She is off to camp in a few days and then back to school. Sister says she's doing nobly in school, that she is having a mother's care. So I suppose there is nothing to do but to let her stay where she is,

though I really wish Sister had married and had children of her own.

Another:

Anne writes that she has won the prize for the best essay in sophomore English—that she may become an editor! Well, God keep her out of the law!

Several weeks following these entries he had written:

Six thousand does not go as far as I had thought. Sister says Anne needs more and more clothes all the time. It seems that the less girls wear the more it costs. I suppose that's sound economics and entirely just, but it's hard on a sinecure.

A chain of figures rattled in his mind as he read this, the first hint of the financial difficulties which had befallen him. He paused long enough to think what fee he might expect from the Effie Graham case. Horace, curiously enough, had never said anything about the fee; perhaps he intended the judge's salary to cover such minor chores. Running down the first entry he had made of Horace, he read:

We have a new chancellor now—a preacher I once helped in a libel suit. I dislike seeing Meacham go, and I am not any too happy over Dickey's prospects. He is far too much of a tragedian. He believes, I gather from his utterances, that he is the hero who has entered upon the scene of American education just in time to avert the seduction of the higher learning by cultured and liberal-minded villains. That conviction makes him dangerous and is likely to make him systematically unscrupulous. He was born to be a college president; that is evident from his looks and his manner. I remember he once wrote me just after I came here as Dean of Law. He is professionally friendly.

A few months later he had set down an account of the doctor's first visit:

Dickey and his young aide-de-camp were here to-day, trying to prevent a scandal. I promised to see the authorities and get

a serious case dismissed. Dickey is not a bad sort. I feel rather sorry for him; he is the least bit pathetic in a big position. I think of him mostly as I would of a wistful boy who is playing robber or judge or sheriff. I rather like the fellow but I don't like his getting me mixed up in lawsuits again.

He turned the pages rapidly now, following a narrative in his mind and pausing to read only the items which carried it forward:

Dickey and I played golf this afternoon and talked about diseases at the clubhouse afterward. Pathology holds the same fascination for him that it does for me. I told him about a case of pyæmia I had witnessed, and he told me of a man he had seen with tetanus. We are now warm friends.

* * * * *

Horace was here to-night. He is a great football enthusiast, and I told him about Red Thompson in the old days when men were giants and our mascot was as big as Sphinx Harmon. It amused him greatly, and we had a pleasant evening until he prevailed upon me to take the Effie Graham case. Gradually I am being pulled back into the maelstrom of law.

* * * * *

The Effie Graham battle is bitter. Her heirs are protesting the gift on grounds of mental incompetence, and I am inclined to believe that other brethren in the state who want her money are aiding her counsel with evidence. I'd like to claim the money for Horace, though he is in his own sublime way unconscious of the unpleasantness involved and the nature of my favor. I could not tell him. It would seem cheap. Besides, I exaggerate this unpleasantness. Thousands of lawyers go through with what I have to endure.

After closing the entry he had written in small letters the next time he opened the book:

But that does not make my lot any less bitter.

Again he had set down:

I am afraid that my health has begun to fail, and the very fear of it is an indication that I am not normal. There is no

reason, save that I loathe the courtroom. Well, the Effie Graham case may be cleared up any day now, and then I shall feel freer. I must tell Horace that I cannot take any more cases.

All that he read seemed strangely reminiscent—almost repetitious—of what lay unread in the oldest ledger on the floor. His life had been one unceasing flight from the profession he had chosen, then despised. A curious fate seemed to have dashed from his hand whatever chalice promised to contain happiness. His face lighted up with amusement for a moment as he thought of having refused a call to enter the ministry. Perhaps that was the explanation of his conspicuous success and abysmal misery in the law.

Hurriedly he turned to the latest entries; they were written with a different color of ink, and he wondered if that could be of any significance. There was another about Anne:

She is in Europe now. Sister says her talent in music has developed enormously in the last year and that both of them felt it would be broadening to spend a year in Paris. Well, it's so broadening to me it's flattening. . . .

Only a few days before he had written in a brief notice of the stadium donation:

They are going to call it the King War Memorial Stadium, and it seems somehow to be in honor of those who died and those who were shot to pieces in France. I don't quite get this American habit of building arenas in honor of invalids and ghosts, but I suppose it gives a fine touch of sentiment to the enterprise. I don't know whether Horace made the landing or not; and I don't know what he has in mind. I do know he has built a great school in the short course of his administration. I think they ought to give him a letter along with the rest of the boys.

With a sigh he stood up from his chair and walked to the old secretary, the ledger open in his hand. Shep watched him for a moment, then laid his head on his paws and went back to

sleep. Taking a pen in his hand, the judge twiddled his beard with it for a moment and then wrote:

My friend Horace was here to-night. Things were a trifle tense, somehow. He ended up by telling me that he intended to land Arthur King. I might, of course, have known that he must sooner or later enlist the aid of the dragon, but it is as though Jesus had from the Cross appointed Pilate the first priest of the Holy Roman Church. I do not blame Horace. He is engaged on what seems to him and his contemporaries a great undertaking. Any great undertaking demands money; otherwise it would not be great.

He sat back thoughtfully; then, writing vigorously, finished the entry:

What will become of me remains to be seen. It is too much to expect that my wishes be respected in a matter where great enterprise is involved. I am to myself and to my contemporaries a very minor character in a relatively minor episode. Really, we can't call off the opera because one of the supes doesn't like Mary Garden.

TWENTY-EIGHT

THE Willinghams and the Hawks were coming for dinner. They had been to the executive mansion before, but to-night promised to be different. Marion was to plan the meal and act as hostess. The fact was that the three families had dined together so often that a ceremonious rivalry had sprung up between them. Mrs. Willingham had the most modest facilities, but she managed to stay in the running; Mrs. Hawk put on the most opulent display, for she had a butler and a serving maid; it occurred to Mrs. Dickey that the best edge she could get on the others was to have her grown daughter take charge for an evening.

It was, of course, the Hawks who had come first. Mrs. Hawk was already chattering about what a clerk at Hirsch's had said to her that afternoon. "And so," the doctor heard her say, "I want you to know that I turned right around then and there and *reported* her to the floor walker. What else *could* I do?" Mrs. Hawk was aristocratically stout. Virginia said she was unnecessarily so, but the doctor always thought she looked rather nice. She had a vast forehead and a mannish voice, and she always italicized half of her words. Every day she lived seemed to be a fresh experience for her, and she remembered the slightest incidents as though they were towering events in a stately drama. . . .

The doctor sat on the sofa between his wife and Mr. Hawk's wife. Mrs. Hawk smelled very strongly of perfume, and he felt his moral sensibilities loosen, but Virginia was there on the other side to tighten them up again.

"Have you been out to the automobile show?" Virginia was asking Mr. Hawk. Even so simple a question seemed to carry from her a sort of cold, scientific analysis. She crossed her legs as she asked it and adjusted her skirt in a conspicuously proper fashion.

"No, but we're going soon. Anna wants a new car. I don't know why," he went on with both a sharp glance and a grin

at his wife, "but she does. I'm afraid, if I take her out, the jig will be up."

"He don't know *why*," Mrs. Hawk replied, laying her hand almost on the doctor's lap with a gesture imploring his sympathy. "The best one we've got now is a *wreck*. And it's just as I *tell* Simeon, it's a good thing from an *investment* standpoint to keep a brand new one all the time."

"There are some lovely new models," Marion informed them. "I was out there last night—that is, yesterday." She entwined her fingers and stretched her arms down over her crossed knee, as though slightly embarrassed at interrupting an adult conversation.

"I should think there would be," Mrs. Dickey retorted. "But it's just as I tell Horse, the show is nothing but an advertising scheme to get people who can't afford them to buy new machines."

Mr. Hawk looked very thoughtful at this. It was pleasant to have Mrs. Dickey agree with him, but he saw the danger in her philosophy. Dr. Dickey hastened to say:

"Of course, that's perfectly legitimate, darling."

"Certainly it is, Horse, if you've got the money."

"*Well*," Mrs. Hawk returned desperately to the conversation, "I don't know whether *we* can afford it or not, *but* I *do* think it would be a good *investment*."

The door bell rang again, and Marion started to get up. Then, apparently thinking better, she sat still.

The Willinghams came in self-consciously, and Marion was first to greet them. The colonel looked spick and span in his dark suit, and Mrs. Willingham, a pretty blonde with scandalous bobbed hair, looked stately and seductive in her black evening dress. Both of them seemed a little timid.

"I hope we're not late," Mrs. Willingham apologized. "Grover came in late, and I had to dress him after I dressed myself."

"Well, you did a good job of it," the doctor said warmly. "Come over and be seated." The colonel took up his position between Mrs. Hawk and the chancellor's wife, and Marion was left with Mr. Hawk.

"You're not the least bit late," the doctor went on.

"Yes, I like it fine," Marion told Mr. Hawk.

"I'm awfully glad we're not," Mrs. Willingham replied. "I do so hate to be late. It's so vulgar."

"We haven't been *yet*, but we're going," Mrs. Hawk told the colonel.

"Of course, lots of times you can't help being late," the doctor said gently.

"There are a lot of mighty fine people in Oil City, if you get to know them," Mr. Hawk said with civic pride tightening his chest.

"I don't know that we'll go out at all," Mrs. Dickey informed Mrs. Hawk and the colonel. "We don't need another car just yet, and I know the show will only make us want one."

"Oh, I'm sure there must be," said Marion.

"Yes, there are times when you can't help being late. You simply can't."

"*Well*, we don't exactly *need* one but it would certainly be *nice* to *have* one."

"There's a wild young set here that you must be careful about, of course. I'm a great hand for believing in the old-fashioned things. Why, when I was a boy . . ."

"I remember I used to worry a great deal about being late when I was a young man."

"This old rattletrap I'm driving may fall to pieces any day. I laugh and tell the wife that it sounds like a concrete mixer."

"But do you think the younger generation is really any worse than the older one?"

"So many times I think people try to make an impression with cars. I think if you're really fine, it will come out even in a Ford."

"I had a cousin once who was always late. No matter where we went, she was late. Never on time."

"Of course you can be fine and all *that* in anything. But it's just the *comfort* and the investment."

"The young folks to-day are certainly different. It's just like your daddy says—there's no telling what they do."

"If one is always on time they lose a lot of time. I know a preacher who read the Bible through last year while he was waiting for people who were late."

The sight of Sarabelle opening the French door which led to the dining room hushed the conversation abruptly. Marion got up.

"Choose your partners," she commanded, taking Mr. Hawk's arm with a roguish smile, "and come out to dinner."

Colonel Willingham was pinioned between Mrs. Hawk and Mrs. Dickey, and the doctor remarked casually to Mrs. Willingham, "Well, I guess we're together."

At the table the conversation resumed its haphazard course until the fruit cups had been cleared away and steaming soup had been brought in by Sarabelle—so slowly that the first bowl was not steaming by the time the last was deposited. It was a good deal like taking a radio and tuning in on every station just long enough to tune out again.

"I declare, Marion, if you planned this meal, you're a wonder."

"Your husband has certainly performed a great service for the university in organizing the alumni."

"I told Horse he needn't be so pernickity about it."

"My brother has a boy that goes and goes all the time; I think he drinks some."

Toward salad the chancellor had said everything he could think of to the pretty wife of the business manager, and he called across the table to Mr. Hawk, assuming at the same time a decidedly more official and businesslike tone:

"Hawk, you'll be interested to know that that Graham endowment gift is going to come through all right."

Mrs. Hawk kept on talking to Mrs. Dickey about the problem of garbage disposal at her home, but Mr. Hawk showed considerable interest. "Is that so?" he remarked. "That's going to mean a great deal, Doctor."

"Yes, it will," the doctor replied, laying down his one remaining fork and dabbing his mouth with his napkin. "It will mean two million to start with, unless I'm mistaken." The words were spoken louder than the rest of the conversation and everyone instinctively paused at the mention of so much money.

"How much?" said Mrs. Hawk.

"Two million, dear," her husband replied.

"Of course, that's confidential," said the doctor. "And I'm

not ready to announce it officially yet, but I had a conference with Judge Buck this afternoon, and he tells me there is little likelihood of the gift being contested successfully."

"Isn't that *nice*?"

"When did you learn that, Horse?" Mrs. Dickey demanded sharply.

"Only this afternoon, dear." Then he went on to the table at large. "It's only a bare start toward the ten, of course."

"Well, a little more than bare," said Mr. Hawk.

"I'd say it was a bully start," said Colonel Willingham. His wife laughed at his ready way, and Dr. Dickey thought he felt her looking at him respectfully.

"Buck thinks he can straighten out the legal difficulties, does he?" Mr. Hawk resumed.

"Oh, yes. Oh, yes. He says there'll be no great trouble there," the chancellor announced in an offhand way. "Buck will take care of that. Any shrewd lawyer could handle a case like that."

"How has the judge been lately, Horse?"

"He hasn't been so well. His doctor tells him he ought to have more exercise."

"Funny case, that," Colonel Willingham contributed.

"*That's* what I always told Simeon. I've said Buck's one of the *smartest* men in this whole *country*. Just seems that he hasn't the ambition or *something*." Mrs. Hawk proclaimed this as though it were the result of an expert diagnosis.

"Well, it isn't so very strange," Simeon countered.

Everyone was silent for a moment.

No one but Colonel Willingham, ever ready to supply lacking details, however obvious, seemed inclined to go on. The colonel explained:

"Buck's a sort of mystery to everybody. He's run in hard luck the biggest part of his life. He's a peculiar fellow, for one thing, and it isn't everybody that likes him. As a matter of fact, he's got some pretty bitter enemies—and a lot of them are pretty powerful. That is, so the rumors run. Nobody knows just what it's all about. I happen to know that the judge used to be a big attorney, handled the greatest cases in the state, and all that. But he had a way of making people mad in court. He

had a way of making his opponents think it was his cleverness that put over a conviction. Then they all got it in for him. I think he sort of got discouraged with it all and just kind of let down, the older he got."

"Never had much luck collecting his fees, either," Mr. Hawk supplemented with a sad face.

"Yeah, that's right," the colonel nodded. "Just between us, and I wouldn't want this to go any further, he was in a pretty bad way when he got to be dean of law. I don't think his finances or his health would have lasted much longer."

"We've done a lot to help him along," said the sage Mr. Hawk. "Rather a pity, though. Wish he could get entirely on his feet again."

"Do you know," Mrs. Hawk asked, her eyes bulging, "I heard that Wilson considered making him attorney general when he *first* went in office?"

"You don't say!" Mrs. Willingham gurgled.

"Yes. That's what I've *heard*."

"I don't know that it's entirely true," added Mr. Hawk, and his wife bridled. "But I do know he stood very high in politics and law not a great many years back."

"Well, he's a good, competent lawyer," the chancellor continued. "And a fine man. I don't suppose there ever was a finer man. Of course, it's only natural he should do what he has for the school in a legal way. But, apart from that, he's a mighty fine man. A mighty fine man."

Mrs. Hawk insisted upon monopolizing the conversation to compliment Marion on her clever dessert and upon the meal in general, and the conversation exploded into nothings until the crowd reassembled in the drawing room. The three wives fell in together, and Marion sat with her father and the other men. The doctor seemed a bit anxious to weave the conversation around his own interests and after they had listened to Marion tell about a funny drunk she had seen at the automobile show, he said in the pompous tone he kept for official business:

"Well, gentlemen, even if Mrs. Graham's gift comes through in good order, which I have no doubt it will, that leaves us plenty to do."

"It certainly does," agreed Colonel Willingham emphatically. "You've certainly got the alumni where you want them, though, Doctor."

The doctor smiled modestly. "Yes, they're coming through splendidly. Thanks to you and Mr. Hawk. I think I'll be able to announce some gifts in the next few weeks that will surprise even you." Then he hastened on before they could ask him what gifts he had reference to. "But even so, there's much to be done if we're to get that ten-million endowment by fall."

"Do you seriously think you can get that endowment by fall?" Mr. Hawk inquired, leaning forward and rubbing his hands.

"He certainly does," said Marion. "He talks about it in his sleep." She was nibbling a little trinket which she wore around her neck. "He'll get it or bust a hamstring."

"Marion's right," the doctor conceded, thrusting his thumbs in his vest armholes jovially and letting dignity go hang for a moment. "I'm going to get it. Every cent of it." He smiled like a magician at his fellow officers.

"If you do you'll put over the biggest programme in the biggest way of any man I know," commented Mr. Hawk, shifting in his chair and crossing his legs over the prospect of such a spectacle. After his surprise and delight had ebbed his business suspicion flowed quickly back to his mind, and he went on: "I don't want to pry into your secrets, but it would be nice to know where you think you'll get the money."

The doctor swaggered in his chair and held up a restraining palm. "Don't be too anxious, Hawk. Leave it in my hands. I've made up my mind, and that's more than half the battle."

"It's just like *that*, you see," Marion explained, snapping her fingers cavalierly and winking at the colonel and Mr. Hawk with stagey ado. "Now you don't see it, and then in a few months you do. Dad's the Houdini of college presidents."

"You've got me beat," grunted the colonel, gathering his paunch tenderly in his hands and sighing at the mystery. "Unless," he added with a sudden inspiration that distorted his ugly face, "you think you can land Arthur King."

"Tush! Tush!" Mr. Hawk reserved the words for what seemed to him palpable absurdities.

"Why do you think it's so impossible?" the doctor asked.

"You haven't done it, have you?" The chairman of the board leaned forward tensely.

"No, I haven't—yet."

Mr. Hawk leaned back and thrust his hands in his pockets as though relieved. "I didn't think you had."

"Well, I'm not as ready to give up as you men," and the doctor spoke his words with lordly emphasis. "It is clear to me that if we are to build up a great school here we must have the unqualified support of some man like King. And King is the richest man in this section. He can give more than all the rest of the country put together without missing anything."

"He's the richest, all right," Colonel Willingham agreed. "They tell me that man has a wealth of something over thirty million. Whew!" The repetition of the figures seemed to exhaust him.

"That doesn't mean any more to me than thirty dollars," Marion soliloquized.

"*Who* has that much, Simeon?" Mrs. Hawk called out desperately to her husband.

"Arthur King," he answered.

"*Oh! Arthur King? Humph!* He's a scalawag. I don't care *how* much he's got. Besides, he's *crazy!*"

"Any man with that much money would be," Marion retorted, but Mrs. Hawk ignored her and turned an imaginary crank over her right ear to emphasize her scorn for Arthur King.

"I wonder if he really is crazy?" the doctor asked. "I've heard some funny reports."

"Everybody probably hates him," Marion interrupted again, but Mr. Hawk took her words as his cue:

"That's true. Everybody does have it in for him, and I suppose it's largely because he has so much money."

"He never gives a cent to charity or any worth-while cause," the colonel contributed.

"That is funny, isn't it?" The doctor twiddled his thumbs dejectedly at the thought of such a man.

"Well," Mr. Hawk announced with such finality that it seemed he never intended to say anything else, "you'll never land Arthur King. I know whereof I speak." Thus delivered of his last utter-

ance, he leaned forward a little more eagerly to reply to whatever might be said next.

"Maybe not," said the doctor. "He's a hard man, I suppose. What do you know about him, Hawk?"

"Oh, not a great deal. I think he is sort of loco, though I guess I oughtn't to say it. He never goes anywhere or does anything. I never saw him but a time or two when we were in the bank together. We happen to do business at the same bank." Pride had crept in, and he could not go on.

"He's a funny fellow," Colonel Willingham added forlornly. "They tell me that every morning he gets up and shaves and dresses and then just sits around the house all day and moons. Except on Thursday. Then he goes down to the bank in one of his cars and talks with Coates a few minutes and goes back out and just sits the rest of the day."

"I wonder what's the matter with the old man?" The chancellor carried on with the colonel and Mr. Hawk.

"I don't know." It was the colonel who replied; it was evident that he did know or that he thought he knew. "He used to be on a ranch in the Panhandle in the early days, you know. I've heard a lot of talk about his being caught out in a blizzard or lost on the plains one August. I forget which it was, but they say he's been funny since then. He was in the asylum one year, and then he made so much money off of oil that they couldn't keep him in."

"Yes, he developed a very strong enmity for another rancher named Slade, I believe it was," the doctor supplemented casually. "I hardly think, though, that that would account for his being queer. I wonder if anyone has ever been kind to him in the last twenty years. You know, it has been my experience that rich people are often the most lonely."

"I'll take his dinner out to him some day, Dad," Marion volunteered.

"That might do, Daughter," he smiled. "I really think, gentlemen, that we owe it to ourselves to reach this man. He might be persuaded to do the most liberal thing we can imagine."

"Well, if I can help you any, let me know," the colonel offered. "But he'll be a hard sucker to land."

"Yes," nodded the chairman, "he will. And I wouldn't advise you to count on him too much, Doctor, in this endowment cam-

paign. But if you get him you ought to have the Congressional medal."

The chancellor leaned back in his chair so heavily that it creaked. He was very content, and his eye traced a happy design on the ceiling. It was evident from his silence that he was willing to let the conversation for the rest of the evening take any turn that it might. Things were going well. It would be a tremendous strain, but he was in a fair position now to put things over in a big way. He felt a chill, an old chill, at the base of his spine.

SPRING fell like a benediction over the campus of Martha Sumner University, transforming its scrawny trees into blossoming bushes and spreading a mortician's carpet of green over the terrain. Then the high, cutting blasts of March bowed the trees to the east and flattened the grass as though caskets had been reposed upon it. It was a spring of sudden, terrifying changes. The day would dawn lovely in prospect only to fall into a howling, weird, discordant orchestra of saxophones before the noon; toward evening the sky, exhausted and bloodshot, would suddenly grow benevolent again and leave the world with only faint reminders of its fury. By night exotic winds would blow—coming, it would seem, from a point a thousand miles away and bringing with them the faintest odors of distant lands, demoralizing young men and women with what they brought, and tantalizing them strangely to follow where the winds were going. It was a season which seemed to buffet and belabor self-control.

On the morning of April first there was scarcely a breeze to reward the patience of freshmen who stood at the foot of the steps of Martha Sumner Hall. Here and there students walked or stood in little groups, glad to be out of doors again, like children allowed to wade in the streets when the rain has subsided. Nature seemed a friend to man that morning and save for frat whistles and the shrill giggles of junior girls, there was not a sound to break the stillness. Life had grown quiet and restful and save for a few freshmen who seized one another's chemistry books and ran pell-mell until overtaken and thrown to the ground by their pursuers, there was hardly a movement to interrupt the pantomime of education.

Then along the central drive of the campus, its klaxon sounding incessantly, and its motor straining at the hood, thundered a huge sedan. Even before its brakes shrieked and brought it to a halt at the very steps of the administration building, the campus had become an ant bed. Students peered from upstairs windows, students emptied out of the building, students ran to storm the car. The tableau had become an opera, and everywhere there was

the greatest turmoil. Freshmen in their bright green caps leaped from the machine, carrying in their arms precious yellow bundles and shouting above the general disorder :

"Hi-ya! Hi-ya! Get your *Josher*! Only a few left. Get your *Josher* now. Twenty-five cents, a quarter of a dollar. Two bits and worth a million."

They could have saved their breath. That car, rushing up the drive at full speed on the morning of April first, had told every mother's son and daughter that the blunderbuss paper—the huge retort of the students to the faculty, the one inalienable right left the downtrodden undergraduate—the delightful, gossipy, scandalous, side-splitting *Josher* was ready. Here and there the freshmen went. Ten o'clock classes and chapel were over now, and the students rushed panic-stricken into the halls and onto the campus.

"Hi-ya! Hi-ya! Get your *Josher*! All about the chancellor and the inaugural ball."

"Hi-ya! Hi-ya! Get your *Josher*! For two bits read the low-down on the dean of women!"

"Hi-ya! Hi-ya! Get your *Josher*. Only a quarter of a dollar. What does our Prexy do at nights?"

"Petting classes to be started by Prexy! Get your *Josher*! Get your *Josher*!"

"Hi-ya! Hi-ya! All about the big raid on the Pi Phi House! Get your *Josher*!"

Plain young girls who had clutched quarters in their hands through two classes gave the sweaty money to freshmen. Professors, smiling to let the students know they were making a concession and being good fellows, paid gladly a part of their salary to read. Anemic students who could never be suspected of taking any part in the hilarity of college life bought copies and stood against the wall to read the contents while they snickered. Every newsboy was swamped, and he labored frantically to make the change and not get whipped by an upperclassman. But even the Freshies were respected to-day if they had *Josher*s to sell.

The doctor stepped out of his office to investigate the uproar. He had heard something of the *Josher* and remembered its appearance the spring before. There would be perfectly absurd but relatively harmless articles on his leading the grand march

at a ball to be given in the new Effie Graham building at the time of its dedication. This would be a trifle irreverent, but students would have their fun. Besides, these stories were but another way the students had of showing that they knew his uncompromising devotion to morality and his unflinching condemnation of the dance. There would be scandalous things on the Dean of Women and the Pi Phi's, but the things couldn't be true; if they were, there would be nothing funny in printing them on April Fool's Day. It was all a good joke, and it would be well to let the students have their innocent amusement.

He bought a copy of the yellow sheet, printed in glaring red ink, to the immense delight of a crowd of students. Once again he felt near the heart of the student body. He was a part of them; he was participating in the things that amused and delighted them. He bought a copy, but he had not read it when Colonel Willingham walked up with one in his hand. Without a word the business manager took the doctor's arm and led him back into his office.

"Have you read this?" the beefy little man demanded sharply.

"Why, no," the doctor replied. "I thought I'd humor the students and buy one, though."

"Well, you'd better have a look at it right away," the colonel informed him. Then he went over and sat down, propping the paper up on his knee. "It's the rottenest thing that has ever been printed around this university, and I think I know who did it."

Bewildered and with sad misgivings that what was printed there would affect his campaign for expansion, the doctor held the sheet up and scanned it.

Splashed in lurid, billboard letters across the top of the front page ran the caption:

PREXY FOSTERS DIRTY ATHLETICS

Beneath the banner display was a second-deck headline spread over three of the paper's five columns:

HIRES RINGERS TO PUT SCHOOL
ON MAP; USES FOOTBALL STARS
TO WIN SUPPORT OF BUSINESS MEN

His eyes sped down the column, and before they had blinked twice it told him the whole story. The piece was a dirty, deliberate, malicious attack on his administration written in the guise of humor. More slowly he went back over the column and singled out the passages which concerned him. He noted that throughout he had been referred to as the Reverend Mr. Horace Ethelmore Dickey. There was nothing to do now but to study the whole thing carefully. He sank into a chair, adjusted his glasses fiercely, and began to read:

It is a matter of common knowledge among those acquainted intimately with university affairs that what the Reverend Mr. Horace Ethelmore Dickey has brought to this institution is a football team. There are of course other furbelows, such as a School of Commerce, in which young boys not yet dry behind the ears learn how to hoopskootch their fellow beings selling real estate. And there is the new Effie Graham Home, apparently a scheme to prevent fallen girls by locking them up every night.

These contributions are not to be despised. They are all that could be expected of a good pastor, such as Mr. Dickey was before a conclave of business men solicited him to become the educator of Southwestern youth. But they are paled into insignificance by the one outstanding achievement of the new administration—the acquisition of super-thyroid athletes and the use of their services to make the university a public spectacle which will enlist the support of the local Babbitts.

With his sniveling henchman, the ineffable Grover Cleveland (spare his shade) Willingham, Mr. Dickey has managed to pull together a display of talent which rivals anything in our bailiwick. And how has he done it? Three guesses. Right on the first. He has hired athletes wholesale and assigned them places of distinction in the student body. And this, mark you, has been done out of the coffers of the university and with the full approval of the administration.

The doctor felt much too sick at heart to follow the account to its sordid close. Even the little he had read seemed violently to affect his respiration and his pulse. He was indignant, yet he was conscious at the same time that he ought to be more indignant. He was excited, yet he felt an almost lethargic calmness

steal over him. And all the while Willingham was waiting for him to explode. He must do it.

"Colonel," he said between gritted teeth, "what on earth is the meaning of this?" The words sounded noble enough to pass for a ringing demand, but back of them in the doctor's mind was the real question that wanted an answer. Why had the piece been written? What was all this about hiring athletes and charging his administration with graft? Why should anyone want to make such charges?

"The meaning is perfectly clear," Willingham said, getting up and walking over to the doctor's chair, "Perfectly clear."

Perfectly clear? The words echoed back and forth idiotically through his mind. How perfectly clear? And why? Then slowly it came upon him, first with the imperceptible glimmer of a dawn and then with the blinding flash of an exploding shell: Easton was responsible for all this. He was! Yes, he was the sneaking, low-down wretch who would stoop to anything but a fair fight.

No wonder he had not suspected. How absurd to think that a professor would resort to such childish tricks to turn the sentiment of the university against its administration. It was all perfectly incredible but perfectly clear. Perfectly clear.

"Colonel," he raised his voice again and found it strangely hoarse, "Colonel, do you think Easton is responsible for this tirade?" There was still a note in his voice which betrayed his wish for a denial.

Willingham threw his copy of the paper on the chancellor's desk with such force that the wind scattered letters over the desk and onto the floor.

"There is no doubt about it. Absolutely no doubt about it. That's Easton's doings and McKnight's and that crowd's. I told you when you first came here as chancellor, Dr. Dickey, that they were out to get you. You never wanted to believe me, but I think this is all the proof you need. There's nothing too mean for them to do to get rid of you, and they'll never be satisfied until you are out of this office. Why that is I don't know. I suppose they're simply pin-headed. Simply pin-headed. They're sore heads and back biters. Used to running everything. They can't even see the value of a football team. They don't know what athletics means to a school."

The doctor shook his head sadly. He wished very much he knew what to do. Until he did he might just as well ask questions.

"But why should they go so far as to charge me with hiring athletes? I never hired an athlete. That's a malicious lie, isn't it?"

"Oh certainly," Willingham replied emphatically. "Why should they stop at lying?"

The doctor's bewilderment would not forsake him. Like some nauseating physical pain it hung on to him and contorted his face.

"But I don't see where they get any grounds for saying that I have hired athletes. I've tried to be a good sport and take part in their games and all that. But I haven't hired players. That would be terrible."

"Of course you haven't," the colonel assured him. "They're all a pack of liars, and you see where they will go if they are not checked. They're out after your hide, and they'll do anything to get it. You've got to take some steps at once to stop this libel. There's no telling how much harm it will do you. You simply can't let it go on."

The doctor was on the verge of asking what steps he should take, but he checked himself in time to say:

"Find out as soon as you can what students edited that paper and let me know."

Willingham accepted his commission readily and went out. The doctor turned and once more picked up the filthy sheet from his desk. The more he read the clearer his thinking became: However true the charges were or however false, it would not do to let the world think them true. They might be false as the book of Third Peter, but once the students and the constituency got it into their heads that the charges were true the effect on his administration would be disastrous. And as he sat earnestly trying to think of some device by which he could still the voice against him, he realized how tedious and devastating excitement can become. He lacked now the old fire and the old vim with which he had met earlier crises. Yet this one was more serious than all the rest.

That noon he told the whole story to Virginia—told it rather sheepishly, in fact; and as he told it he felt very tired and de-

pressed. It was as though he had run miles to bring a message and had gotten to his goal too exhausted to talk. Marion was there, too, and that made him all the more reluctant to air his troubles. His wife listened eagerly, and when he had finished she took her ribboned glasses and scanned the yellow sheet to see if he had missed anything.

"Why, Horse! This is preposterous." Her gaze swept the headlines, measured the dimensions of the insult, then fell upon a boxed item in the centre of the page that had escaped the doctor's attention:

WHAT DICKEY MEANS

Apropos of our chancellor, we beg leave to quote an appropriate passage from Webster's Dictionary:

dickey 1. dik i 2. dik y I. *a.* (Slang or Colloq.) 1. Dubious; risky; precarious. 2. Insecure, unsafe, tumbledown. 3. In poor health; unsound; queer. II. *n.* 1. A detachable linen-shirt front; a false bosom. 2. A seat behind the body of a carriage, for servants. 3. A pinafore or bib. 4. A donkey; a jack-ass bird.

"Did you read all of this?" she demanded shrilly.

"No, my dear," he replied wearily. "Spare me the rest. I saw enough."

Her scrutiny fell once more upon the yellow sheet. "This about Teddy King," she said, "is scandalous," and the *s* in scandalous she dragged into a hiss.

"What is that?" the doctor asked with returning alarm.

"'Rube Goldberg,'" Mrs. Dickey read, "'famous cartoonist of deformity, has been commissioned by the Very Reverend Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey to cast at once a statue in bronze to commemorate the extraordinary beneficence of Theodore King for his generosity in giving the university a stadium. The new portals to the university are to be in the form of goalposts, and the statue will stand just beneath these; it is to be in the form of a fat-bellied cherub held aloft in the hairy arms of the greatest of all gorillas—Sphinx Harmon. Sphinx is so dumb he thinks the Hunchback of Notre Dame wrenched his spine in a football game.'"

"Is that all?"

"My heavens, Horse! Isn't that enough?"

"Well, yes. It's terrible. But it could have been worse."

"What do you mean, it could have been worse? Why, I don't see how young men and women could be such utter barbarians. And after all you have done for them."

That was a new thought. He had been good to the students—and this was their way of thanking him. He felt a flicker of real indignation away down inside of him, and what Virginia said next blew just the slightest draft across it.

"I should think these young men and women should be taught a few lessons in common courtesy and manners. They're frightfully ill-behaved, and as long as they are they will be the pawns of such men as your enemies."

That sounded perfectly logical. His enemies were not only blocking his advance but misleading the students. He chewed the idea enthusiastically with his food until Marion spoke:

"Daddy, you don't seem to realize that this is an April Fool paper. It's all a joke. You ought to be a good sport and take it that way."

For a moment the doctor regarded his daughter with interest; then his look changed to one of age's scorn for the counsel of youth.

"But you don't understand all of the things that enter into the story, Marion," he told her sagely. "You wouldn't think it was a joke if you knew all I know about it."

And as he said the words he was suddenly conscious of the fact that he did know all about it. What Willingham had said had been correct.

It was all so perfectly clear that he felt he ought to tell it to Marion. After all, she was his daughter and she had a right to know. Besides, he wanted to put it into such simple language that even a child could understand.

"There are certain men in the university, Marion, who do not like your father," he began. "They opposed my coming to the university as chancellor, but they could not prevent it. They formed a clique when Méacham was chancellor; they were his cronies, and of course they did not like to see him ousted. As long as he was here they could run the whole show. They knew that with me they couldn't. That antagonized them at the start,

and of course they were anxious to find anything they could in my administration to criticize. That was the reason I spoke to you a time or two about being very careful of your conduct."

He paused a moment, and Marion blushed. That confused him, and he hurried on.

"Now it is to the advantage of these men to put me in a bad light every way they can. If I succeed it proves they were wrong. I have started out on a great building and expansion programme, and they have criticized that. They have done all they could to make me fail, and this yellow sheet is just a part of their tricks. They are fighting me, and I must fight back. This is published right at the time when my whole campaign is just being put on foot and with the evident purpose of embarrassing me. You see why I can't take it as a joke. You know it was not intended as such."

Marion was silent for a moment after he had finished. "Perhaps you're right, Dad," she said. "But even if you are, you might be better off if you took this whole thing as a joke." Then she lapsed into an uncomfortably respectable silence, and the doctor felt that she was pitying him.

THIRTY

BISHOP PENDEGRAST was the speaker in chapel on the following Monday. He made a running exposition of the twelfth chapter of Romans and then offered a brief prayer of consecration. When he had finished he closed his Bible, leaned with one arm on the pulpit, and took from his pocket an important-looking paper. Students who had gathered their books into their arms during the prayer waited impatiently for him to say whatever he had to say, their attention caught and momentarily held by the paper he unfolded and held up to read.

"My task is not altogether a pleasant one," he said in a dyspeptic manner which would never lead anyone to suppose that it was pleasant. "I am here as an official representative, a sort of ambassador from your Board of Regents." The word "your" was emphasized ever so slightly. "The brethren of the Executive Committee felt that I should appear here this morning and bring you their greetings and read this message from them to you. I may say by way of introduction that it relates to a rather unhappy, to say the least, publication which was issued last week."

There were snickers throughout the assembly, and the students placed their books on their laps once more. The Bishop concluded that he had better read the message without further ado, but he could not refrain from adding:

"I hope you will give very careful attention to its contents as I read." Then he read in his best pontifical voice as follows:

TO THE STUDENTS OF MARTHA SUMNER UNIVERSITY,
Greetings.

Whereas it has been brought to the attention of this committee that a certain paper of very unhappy make-up and tone was issued on the campus of the university on Thursday of last week, and

Whereas, while this paper purported to be in a humorous vein and offer the usual number of harmless jokes on various members of the faculty, we none the less feel that certain parts of it, to wit, the parts referring to the policies and administration of

Dr. Horace Ethelmore Dickey, our esteemed chancellor, might perchance be construed as having a wider significance than their humor, and

Whereas these passages are done in exceedingly poor taste and smack of serious insubordination, and

Whereas they are likely to give entirely the wrong impression to our friends and patrons throughout the country and to hamper seriously the labors of the chancellor on behalf of the enlarged welfare of the university,

Therefore be it resolved,

That we the Executive Committee of the Board of Regents of the university do hereby express our very great indignation that so dishonorable a story should have been printed in the confines of the university and express our shame that such gross misrepresentation has been made of the administration of Chancellor Dickey.

And be it further resolved that we call upon the students of the university in regular meeting assembled to express their own indignation and join us in frowning upon such a spirit as the aforementioned passages of the anonymous sheet signify.

Be it further resolved that we the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees do hereby express our greatest confidence in the probity and competence of Chancellor Dickey and call upon the fair-minded students of the university to voice a similar confidence, that the great purposes of the university may be achieved to the honor and glory of God and the welfare and improvement of mankind.

The bishop withdrew without comment to his seat, and the students were bewildered and amused. Then the university chaplain, Dr. Swanson, got up with all the two hundred pounds of his dignity and spoke as follows:

"You have all heard the very fine resolution which Bishop Pendegrast has been good enough to bring us from the Executive Committee. I'm sure we all agree with the tone and letter of these very fine resolutions and would like to say as much.

"Now, all of you in favor of them let it be known by standing."

Someone struggled to his feet on the front row, and two or three others toward the back of the chapel. For a second it

looked doubtful ; then the full, resonant voice of Chaplain Swanson rang out through the hall,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow . . ."

Through habit the students rose to sing, and the vote was unanimous.

That afternoon the papers carried a story to the effect that the student body had repudiated the inferences of the anonymous paper published on April Fool ; and to the most casual observer it seemed that everything would now be all right.

II

But the strains of the Doxology had hardly died out before there were half a dozen petitions going around among the students. All of them expressed the same feeling, not indignation over the publication of the *Josher*, but grave resentment at the encroachment of the Executive Committee on the students' province. If the Executive Committee had sat up all night trying to conceive a scheme for enraging the students and prompting them to mutiny they could not have done better. Malcolm signed all of the petitions. One of them read :

Whereas the Executive Committee of the Board of Regents has had the audacity to come out to the university with a resolution which we have had no part in drafting and which does not express our true sentiments, and

Whereas we do gravely resent the precedent which this does establish in university life, and

Whereas the method of securing our vote of approval seems to us to smack of steam-roller tactics,

Therefore be it resolved,

That we, the undersigned, do protest violently to Chancellor Dickey and to the Executive Committee against such unsportsmanlike methods.

It was signed by at least a hundred students when Malcolm saw it. This fact he duly reported to all he met. The resolution, however, which gained most currency was one which he in-

structed young Seth Roberts to draft. Seth had succeeded him as editor of the *Lasso* and had maintained the proper respect for his predecessor. This petition protested as vehemently as the one quoted above against the methods of the Executive Committee, but the substance of its resolution was as follows:

That we, the undersigned, express the firm conviction that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire; and that, in view of the subsequent action of the Executive Committee and the chancellor of the university, we are led to believe that the charges contained in the recent anonymous sheet, the *Josher*, are substantially correct.

"There, Janet, what do you think of that?"

Malcolm had roved the campus like a werewolf that night and had ended up in the Rawlings apartment. It was his big night, and he felt it tremendously. Janet surveyed the petition he handed her without comment and handed it back to him.

"What did McKnight say about it?" she asked.

"Nothing much. He just grinned. Aren't you going to sign it?"

"Certainly not. Why should I?"

"All right, if that's the way you feel." He put the paper into his inside coat pocket and lighted a cigarette. Janet drew one from a box on the table; since the match was going she might just as well light up.

"Malcolm," she said when she had blown the smoke into the air and watched it form itself into fanciful shapes, like some mysterious vapor, "I think you are very amusing."

Something in the way she said it convinced him that "amusing" was not just the word she wanted it. The woman often made him dreadfully self-conscious, and yet he was convinced that he was her intellectual peer. He thought it best to disdain reply.

"I don't understand why you should be so gravely concerned over the comedy of the university's welfare. You're every bit as bad as Dickey."

"No, I'm not," he said resentfully. "And what if I am? Can't a fellow stand up for the principles he believes in, even if they are not commonly accepted?"

The girl shook her head in indifference to his question. She seemed intent on finding some other way of phrasing her idea. Then she changed the subject slightly, as if in desperation.

"Willingham intends to find out who wrote the *Josher*," she announced.

"He'll never do it."

"I'm not so sure."

They lapsed into silence with little prospect of renewing the conversation and Malcolm wondered why it was he had come by.

"Where's Helen?" he asked.

"Out with Teddy."

"I supposed so."

"Where's Marion?"

"How do I know?"

Janet disregarded his answer. "I wonder what she'll think when she learns you wrote the *Josher*?"

"I didn't write it," Malcolm said fiercely.

"I think it would be awfully dramatic if you gave yourself up—publicly," she went on. "You'd get an awful kick out of that."

He hung his head and sulked; but the idea was not a bad one. Janet had good ideas when they were properly worked. He could see the headlines now: Young Editor Admits Writing Diatribe on President. Says He Was Convinced System Needed Airing.

"Why do you dislike me so, Janet? Of course, I suppose that's the most fascinating thing about you, but I wonder why it is. You always make me feel so blamed uncomfortable."

"I don't intend to, Malcolm. I think you're a very bright boy. But you are so innocent, so fired with zeal, such a conservative revolutionary. You haven't yet reached the stage where nothing matters. And until you do and while you are forever wanting to reform the world, you will be amusing to me. I simply don't understand your psychology."

"Nor do I," said Malcolm proudly.

A few moments later he was off. He had made the rounds of the small collection of friends he kept, and he felt very much alone as he walked the campus now. He would have called Marion

if it had not been so late. He had not seen her in several weeks, and the last time they were together she had been cold toward him. Why was Janet forever throwing Marion in his face? The question puzzled him. Could it be that Janet was jealous? Heavens! Janet seemed to be above a thing like that. She had reached the stage "where nothing matters," he reflected. Yet the possibility of her jealousy delighted him, and he was determined to think it true whether it was or not.

THIRTY-ONE

THE doctor stared as through a mist at the vague sea of faces before him. The events of the past few days had been more than he could interpret. First the publication of a libellous sheet under the guise of an April Fool joke; he had been privately convinced along with Willingham that old man Easton had dictated the disgusting story on athletics, but the most patient inquiry had failed to uncover any evidence with which he could support his charge publicly. Second, the repudiation of the resolution of the Executive Committee; this upset him more than he dared let even Virginia know, for there was nothing to do, the colonel said and the doctor believed, but to construe the repudiation as a student attack upon him and his policies. Third, the baffling skill with which the editors of the anonymous sheet had evaded detection; Dean Banks and the Discipline Committee had examined more than twenty suspects, yet they could not but confess that every arrest had a sufficient alibi. Then, most of all, the mysterious letter which the president of the Students' Association had received the day before, to the effect that the editors would confess publicly in chapel the next day and invited the administration to be present.

It seemed demoralizing to be summoned to chapel; yet curiosity consumed him, and even before the hall was filled he had taken up his position on the platform. Willingham sat on the front row and looked about impatiently. The chancellor's demeanor was grave—graver, in fact, than he wished. The chatter and irreverence of the students told him that he was this morning nothing but a spectacle to them; yet he felt as he had never felt before that he was head of the university and that no chain of events to-day should humiliate him. He had come, he told himself, not out of curiosity but to administer a proper rebuke to the editors when they revealed themselves and to the students when they misbehaved. There was seriously needed in modern education just now a stern and uncompromising assertion of the superiority of the adult mind, and he intended to give it.

Since it was off day in chapel there was no music or preliminaries. The hall, however, was filled to overflowing. Word had got abroad that the editors would confess to-day, and the students scrambled for seats or stood contentedly against the walls. At five minutes after ten no one had come forward to confess, and the doctor began to glance about nervously. What if the letter were only a hoax? The thought turned him cold. If no one came he would certainly let the students know a thing or two.

Just as he was beginning to collect his thoughts for a discourse on discipline, there was a slight commotion at the back entrance of the hall; the entire assembly, quick to sense it, turned and craned their necks. Then through those standing in the door walked two young men, grinning very self-consciously and importantly and marching down the center aisle with a tread that suggested both the bridesmaid and the major general. It was Malcolm Leeds and a younger lad, whom the doctor did not know.

The scene was so incredible that the doctor was not surprised when a cheer from the students broke out and the sacred walls of the chapel reverberated with the yells and handclapping of barbarians. He was not surprised, but he realized then what he did not fully understand before—the students were distinctly hostile to him; they were arrayed not merely against his policies in general but against his person this very minute. And these were the same voices that had not five months ago cheered the stumbling speech of Sphinx Harmon and Coach Huddleston. The students were mad, yet there was no consolation in that.

Onto the stage the editors marched, holding up their hands for the noise to stop. The doctor smiled wanly and looked very steadily at the two young scoundrels. A hush settled over the audience, but it became a sound of escaping steam as the two editors conferred for a moment. Then Leeds turned toward the students with a paper in his hand, and the other sat down beligerently on the edge of a chair.

"Fellow students," Leeds began and then coughed softly into his hand, "as you all know, we are here to confess this morning to having written the hitherto anonymous sheet called the *Josher*. Certain ones, among them the Executive Committee, have seen

fit to take offense at the paper, and since our conduct appears so scandalous, we just thought we'd come right out and confess our sin and take the consequences, if there are any."

This met with a raucous cheer from the back of the house, signifying that nothing could be more absurd than consequences.

"The authorities," continued Malcolm, "have said they intended to expel the editors."

There were cries of "Never! Never! No! No!"

"Well, if they want to, let them come on."

"Atta boy! Stay with 'em, kid!"

"We haven't done anything but keep intact one of the most sacred traditions of the student life of the university. We are in a pretty bad shape if we can't put out an April Fool paper once a year without drawing down on our heads the wrath of the Sanhedrin."

This was a capital phrase, everyone agreed—even those who had never heard of the Sanhedrin. The nervousness of the students in defense of their champion was fast approaching hysteria, and the doctor arose solemnly before things could go any further. Malcolm saw him and rushed on.

"Now, in order to have everything perfectly clear, we have written out our confession, and I want to read it to you."

To the tune of "Hear! Hear!" he then read what the two had deposed in high-sounding legal language, to the effect that "we, the undersigned, did compose and cause to be published" the anonymous "and afore-mentioned paper herein referred to as the *Josher*." When he had finished reading he put the paper back into his pocket and with his companion turned to leave the stage.

"Just a minute, young men," the chancellor called. "Would you mind letting me see that confession?"

Leeds reflected for a moment and then handed it to him, standing all the while sheepishly and impudently.

"Thank you. Now won't you young men just sit down here until I have said a few words?"

They obeyed, looking at each other knowingly. The students had quieted now and sat forward on their haunches like so many wolves, eager to devour the one who should fall.

"I should say, young men," the chancellor began, "that the

paper you wrote was more of a credit to your genius than to your judgment."

The students laughed, and the doctor knew that the epigram he had thought of while shaving that morning had not been used in vain. It seemed spontaneous; now if he could only think of something else to say.

"No one objects to the fact that the paper was published. It's your right to publish it. What I and other members of the administration protest against is the absurd and groundless charges which you have set forth."

"How do you mean groundless?" Malcolm demanded, and his voice was full of fear and anger.

"I don't know anything to do but to define the term," the doctor said in his best public display of good nature. "Without support, unjustified by the facts, false, and so on."

"But they weren't without support," Leeds countered.

"Then you believe them true?"

"Certainly I do." The young man shook his head earnestly. Indeed he seemed to be thinking of nothing but his earnestness.

"Well, that's enlightening," the doctor mused. "Very enlightening. Then you didn't write that paper as an April Fool joke, I take it?"

Malcolm, aware for the first time where his earnestness had led him, hesitated before replying:

"Well, it was a joke till you took it so seriously."

"Yes, I imagine so. You didn't have any idea that I would take it otherwise, did you? Now, young man, I'd like to ask you where you got your information?"

"I don't have to tell you," Leeds retorted sullenly.

"No. You didn't have to tell me that you wrote the paper or that you thought what it contained was true. But since you told me those other things, it would be convincing if you would tell me now where you got your information."

Malcolm sulked and looked straight ahead of him. The doctor knew now that victory was in his grasp. The thought inspired him, and he decided that now was the time to give the students exactly what they needed. He turned to the audience.

"It is easy to see upon what insufficient information this young man has based his charges against my administration. I do not

intend to let those charges pass unchallenged. I have been perfectly amazed since coming to the university to find the flippant manner in which the most sacred things are tossed about on this campus. I do not know what we are coming to in this age when young men from good homes can deliberately print falsehoods about the executives of our institutions of learning. The more I think of it the more I am convinced that such flagrant abuses of privilege, such shameless perversions of decency, ought to be punished by something more effective than expulsion. I believe we ought to have a return to the old days when your roughnecks who attempted to run the school were handled in the proper way."

He went on to tell how his teacher handled the bad boy when he attended the district school on the banks of Catclaw Creek; and though he was able to inject a certain amount of humor into his account, he was steadily more aware as he went on that the mass of students before him had forsaken him again and that only the slightest concussion would be needed to explode them. He tried hard to bring his speech to a close in good order and to declare the meeting adjourned; but the words were hardly out of his mouth when a young man with black hair and shell-rim glasses jumped up from a seat in the middle of the hall.

"Dr. Dickey," he said, "may I have a word?" And without waiting for the permission he would never have received he went on: "I came to this meeting expecting to hear this confession made and then properly received by the administration and everything closed up. But I think I speak the voice of the student body when I say, sir, that we do not appreciate what you have just said."

He paused for plaudits. There was an immeasurable space of silence in which the whole assembly seemed to totter undecidedly, then came a rattle of handclapping which threatened to shake the pictures of the university's benefactors from their hangings around the wall. It marked the turn of the tide, and the doctor saw the vague sea of faces stirred and lashing toward him.

"We don't want to be treated like a bunch of babies," the glasses and black hair went on. "We are men and women by the time we get to college, and we don't need spanking."

The doctor would have retorted with something disastrous, but before he could form the words another young man had got up in the front of the hall and was speaking.

"Fellow students, I used to sit on Dr. Dickey's knee when I was a baby," he confessed, "but I can't go with him in what he says here to-day. I don't believe these young men before us have been guilty of any crime against the state or the institution. They have written out their thoughts. Haven't we a right to do that in this great free commonwealth of ours?"

Apparently the students thought so, for they cheered this pæan to America lustily.

"What's more," the boy went on, his eloquence stirred by the ovation, "it seems awfully funny to me that the authorities have made a lot of fuss over nothing. If these charges are groundless, why say so so often? That's what I'd like to know."

II

The doctor could not recall how the meeting had ended as he walked slowly to his office after it was over. It had lasted actually an hour and a half, and no one had paid the slightest attention to the bell which rang at eleven. But to him it had seemed to drag out over months and months without relief. Nor could he understand, try as he might, the reason for what had occurred.

A body of young men and women from the best Christian homes had suddenly turned vandals in the sanctuary of the university. The same throats which had cheered the Mavericks the season before were now hoarse with the denunciation of athletics. And why? Why? Why? It had been charged that he, the chancellor and a Christian gentleman, had stooped to hire athletes, and the boys and girls under his care had suddenly turned upon him with hatred and scorn.

Certainly the whole débâcle was much too complex for any sound analysis to be made. He could not feel clearly, much less think with any semblance of clarity.

Willingham, however, suffered from no such paralysis. He was indignant beyond expression, but his inarticulateness was the speechlessness of wrath and his conception of what was necessary uncannily sound.

With the wretched turn everything had taken there was nothing to do but to have at once a complete and thoroughgoing investigation of athletics. This, the colonel said, was what the Easton crowd had had in mind when they prompted Leeds to edit the *Josher*, and nothing now could be more effective than to beat the faculty to the job. So it was that, as the winds of rebellion rocked the campus, and while there were rumors that the faculty would act at its next meeting, the doctor announced to the press that he had decided to have a showdown and find out the truth of the charges which had been made against him. He framed the announcement with a great deal of care. It was the source of pride to know that, however closely he might be driven in various emergencies, his official pen was always facile. The papers carried the full text of his proclamation:

In view of the fact that certain grave allegations concerning the conduct of athletics in the institution of which I am chancellor have been made in irresponsible circles of late, I have concluded it the part of wisdom and absolute fairness to ascertain the truth or falsity of these charges.

The action which I am taking is not to be construed as giving credence to the charges which have been made against the fair name of the university. On the other hand, I may say that to my personal knowledge we have remained scrupulously within the bounds of the athletic conference of which we are members. But unfortunately the grave insinuations which have been manifest of late place us in a very embarrassing position with reference to our own code of ethics and with reference to our relationship to our sister colleges.

I have therefore deemed it wise to appoint a representative committee for a full investigation of the athletic affairs of the university.

On that committee I have appointed Professor Richard Easton and Professor John Kingfisher to represent the faculty; Simeon Hawk to represent the Board of Trustees, Mr. Sydney Huddleston, head coach of the varsity; Dr. J. R. Leveridge of the Athletic Board of Control; Mr. James Lloyd, vice president of the Students' Association; and Mr. Leonard Pratt to represent the alumni.

The committee will begin its work at once, and all available records will be placed at its disposal.

Next day two editorials appeared in the local papers commending his heroic action to find the truth. But the doctor knew before the editorials appeared that he had behaved wisely. Too, there was especial shrewdness in his appointment of Easton. With Easton prominently on the committee, the faculty could never yelp that they had been given no voice in the affairs of the investigation. Moreover, as the colonel pointed out while he rubbed his itching red mustache, Easton would undoubtedly behave in such a manner that he would pave the way for his exit. . . .

THIRTY-TWO

THE scene is the executive room adjoining the office of the chancellor. It is Friday afternoon and the investigating committee on athletics is in its second session. The committee is gathered around the long table of the board. It is four-thirty when Chairman Huddleston rises to speak. The door of the chancellor's office opens, and Dr. Dickey, accompanied by Colonel Willingham, steps in and takes up a position just behind the chairman and to his right. (They are very solemn.)

Huddleston: Come in, Dr. Dickey, Colonel Willingham. I am sure the committee very much appreciate the splendid coöperation you are giving. (They bow and Colonel Willingham smiles faintly.) We will now resume our inquiry. I'll ask the secretary to read the minutes of the last meeting.

Easton (stands and reads): "The first meeting of the Committee of Inquiry into Athletics convened in the executive room Tuesday afternoon at four-thirty at the call of the chancellor. Dr. Dickey was present and opened the meeting with a fervent prayer asking for divine guidance in the inquiry. Following this he outlined the purpose and scope of the committee's work and opened the house for the nomination of the various officers. Sydney Huddleston, varsity coach, was elected chairman by a vote of five to two. Richard Easton was elected secretary of the committee by the same vote and over his protest. The time for the meetings was set at four-thirty on Tuesdays and Fridays, it being impossible for all of the members to assemble at any other time. Discussion followed as to what method of procedure should be used, and Professor Kingfisher was asked to read the rules of the Conference relating to the compensation of athletes. He also read the statement which every player is required to sign prior to the declaration of his eligibility. The statement, entered in the minutes at the request of Richard Easton, is as follows: 'I hereby swear upon my honor as a gentleman that I have never at any time received compensation or monetary emolument or encouragement at any time, either directly or indirectly, for my ability as an athlete.' Discussion followed as to the interpre-

tation of this oath for the purposes of the investigation and Chairman Huddleston, supported by Professor Kingfisher and Chancellor Dickey, contended that the emphasis was to be placed on the last phrase, 'as an athlete.' Chairman Huddleston testified that he had known of no violation of the conference rules or of the oath during his tenure as coach. Professor Kingfisher, who accepted the chairmanship of the Athletic Eligibility Committee last year at the chancellor's request, testified that he was not aware of any violations. In reply to a question from Richard Easton as to whether he had ever investigated the eligibility of any one athlete, he replied in the negative. A motion to consider the distribution of the recently created student activity scholarships the order of the day for the next meeting, and to consider the case of five of the varsity's most prominent athletes, was carried after heated discussion, by a vote of four to three."

Huddleston: Are the minutes correct?

Dickey: Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order. If you will spare me a word, though I am not exactly a part of the committee.

Huddleston: Certainly, Dr. Dickey. Take as many as you like.

Dickey: I don't particularly approve of the tone of the minutes, if you don't mind my saying so, Mr. Easton. I doubt that the record you have kept would leave an altogether clean-cut impression with the faculty or public.

Easton: Do you object to any particular item, Dr. Dickey, or do you register merely a general dislike? I personally doubt that the records of the committee will ever be consulted by anyone, but let that pass. I have kept them to the best of my ability.

Dickey: Yes, of course; no hard feeling, I hope. What you had to say about Professor Kingfisher's failure to inquire into the eligibility of players—that doesn't sound just exactly right to me.

Easton: I leave it to the committee. I recorded only what took place.

Dickey: You are not infallible as a recorder, are you, Mr. Easton?

Easton (leaping to his feet, very much annoyed): I make no claim to be. Mr. Chairman, this whole discussion is bootless and

silly. I resign at once from the secretaryship of the committee.

Dickey: If you resign from your office you resign from the committee. (He glowers and then smiles.) And of course you would not want to do that.

Easton (hopelessly): Very well, then; I am awaiting specific corrections of my minutes.

Pratt: I move that the reflection on Professor Kingfisher be stricken from the minutes.

Huddleston: All in favor of the motion say aye.

Easton: It hasn't been seconded.

Hawk: I second the motion, cordially.

Huddleston: All in favor say aye.

(There is a chorus, or at least a quartet of "ayes.")

Easton: Mr. Chairman, I protest.

Huddleston: The motion prevails. Mr. Easton, will you scratch that off your minutes? Now are there any further corrections? If not, the minutes stand approved as corrected by the vote of the committee. I believe we were to look into the student activity scholarships to-day.

Hawk: Mr. Chairman, before you do that, may I say a word?

Huddleston: As many as you like, Mr. Hawk. We're always glad to hear from you.

Hawk: I thought you gentlemen, or most of you, would be glad to hear just how this crazy investigation was being taken in the city. I'm a business man, and I get a chance to learn some things that you men don't. I'll venture to say that this whole trouble has already cost the university a million dollars. And it comes right at a time when we are just beginning to get a grip on the town folk. And just when Chancellor Dickey is beginning to start big things on this campus. I'm mighty sorry it happened, if you ask me, and I don't think we ought to prolong it any longer than necessary quibbling over these little details. Everybody knows there's nothing wrong out here, but the longer we keep prying around, the worse it looks. I just thought you ought to know that.

(He sits down and Leonard Pratt nods his head vigorously. Then he gets up to speak.)

Pratt: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Hawk is entirely right. Only last night I talked to one of the richest men in this part of the country,

and he had seen every game that the Mavericks played last season. He told me he was disgusted with the whole thing and that he thought the chancellor ought to take this committee by the scruff of the neck and shake it. I think we ought to call off the investigation before it's too late.

Dickey: Mr. Chairman, may I say another word?

Huddleston: Certainly, Dr. Dickey, as many as you like.

Dickey: I appreciate more than I can tell you the sentiment which the two gentlemen, both of them business men and strong supporters of the school, have expressed. But I disagree with them. I feel that it is the business of this committee to get at the bottom of this whole thing—at the bottom of the charges, to be perfectly frank, and to clear up this whole mess once and for all.

Easton: Mr. Chairman, we are wasting precious time, but I must express my displeasure at what the chancellor has just inferred. This is not a committee to investigate the faculty. It is a committee to find out the truth about athletics. No one has contended that the charges are correct. We wish merely to look into the whole situation, and I suggest that we proceed with the order of the day.

Huddleston (loath to go on with the meeting at the suggestion of Easton) : Shall we proceed, gentlemen?

Pratt: Go ahead.

Huddleston: I believe we were to look into these student activity scholarships or something like that. I suppose Chairman Hawk of the Board of Regents, by whom the scholarships were created, knows more than any of the rest of us. I'll ask Mr. Hawk to consider himself subpoenaed. Any of you men who want to can satisfy your curiosity.

Easton: How many student activity scholarships are now available, Mr. Hawk?

Hawk: I do not recall just now.

Dickey (interrupting) : I think there are——

Easton: Mr. Chairman, I object. Let this gentleman answer his own questions.

Huddleston: I'm afraid I shall have to re-er-ob-er-sustain that objection. Proceed.

Easton: When were these scholarships created, Mr. Hawk?

Hawk: Sometime last year. I don't remember the exact date.

Easton: You don't remember whose idea they were, I suppose?

Hawk: Not exactly. It was a sort of general suggestion.

Easton: They were created about the same time the so-called Department of Physical Education was created, were they not?

Hawk: As well as I can recall, yes. Mr. Chairman, I object to the ill-bred manner in which I am being questioned. (He straightens his collar and looks daggers at his assailant.)

Easton: I overlook that statement, sir, and proceed with an important question. You don't know, as Chairman of the Board and in a distinctive position to know, how many there are, at whose suggestion they were created, or when they were created. I might pause to say that no one around here seems to know anything, except one man.

Dickey (leaping to his feet): And who is that?

Easton: Not you, Mr. Dickey.

Huddleston: Go on.

Easton: Now, Mr. Hawk, even if you don't know any of these other things, I wonder if you could tell me what was the purpose in creating these scholarships?

Hawk (triumphantly): I can tell you that, sir. They were to encourage poor boys to get an education. They were to be awarded to the young men who showed especially good Christian character and signs of good leadership.

Easton: Scholarship was not a factor in awarding these scholarships, then?

Hawk: Certainly it was. We simply didn't want to put the emphasis upon being a bookworm. We've got too many of them now.

Easton: I see. I understand. Were those scholarships created or instituted originally by the Board of Regents?

Hawk: Yes, sir. Yessiree. They were.

Easton: What did the board at that time think the most important thing to be in considering candidates?

Hawk: Leadership. Leadership. That was the keynote.

Easton: Now, who is allowed the privilege of awarding these scholarships?

Willingham (interrupting): Mr. Chairman, I object. This is

getting us nowhere. Nowhere. I think the gentleman from the faculty should confine himself to the question of athletics and stop prowling around into affairs that have nothing to do with athletics.

Huddleston: I agree.

Easton: Mr. Chairman, if you will give me only a moment, I'll show you I'm dealing with athletics. (Resumes his questioning without permission. Willingham is still standing.) Now, Mr. Hawk, who awards these scholarships?

Hawk: A committee of three appointed by the board. I'm on it. So is Dean Banks. Mr. Allen of the Department of Greek is the other member, I believe.

Willingham: Mr. Chairman, I object.

Chairman: Objection sustained.

Easton (unmindful): Since you know a great deal more than you seemed to know at first, Mr. Hawk, perhaps you could tell us how many of these scholarships there are.

Hawk (sullenly): I don't know.

Easton: Will you please summon Dean Banks or his secretary?

(The chairman goes to the door and returns in a few moments.)

Chairman: Dean Banks cannot be found just now, Mr. Easton.

Easton: His secretary will do, then. Now, one more question, Mr. Hawk. Where do you get a list of candidates for these scholarships?

Hawk: From Dean Banks.

Easton: Willingham never gave you any names?

Willingham: One more crack like that, Mr. Chairman, and I'll take this meeting into my own hands.

Easton: I'm sure you'd like to do just that.

(Willingham makes as though to move in Easton's direction when the door opens and a young woman, apparently very much bewildered by the confusion, steps in.)

Chairman: Ah, here is Dean Banks' secretary. Won't you come in? (The gentlemen move around the table and make room for her to sit near the chairman. He continues): Now, Miss——

Miss Williams: Williams.

Chairman: Of course. Miss Williams, we will want to ask you a few questions. Or at least, Mr. Easton there will. I hope you will answer these questions to the best of your ability and not be frightened or upset by the proceedings.

Miss Williams: I'll try.

Easton: Do you know how many student activity scholarships are available at the university this year?

Miss Williams: There are forty, I believe.

Easton: Are you sure that is correct? Do you have the records where you could get them?

Miss Williams: I have a list in the office of those awarded this year. I can get them.

Easton: Please do so, at once.

(She goes out. The committee jabbers; Pratt, Willingham, and Huddleston talking among themselves. The doctor taps on the desk with his fingers, and Easton sits very stolidly, glancing nervously at the door. Miss Williams returns, looking distressed, and everyone is quiet.)

Easton: Well?

Miss Williams: I couldn't find them. (She looks about the room inquiringly.)

Easton: They were not in your files?

Miss Williams: No, they were not.

Easton: Did you look elsewhere?

Miss Williams: Yes, I did.

Easton: That's interesting. Do you remember when you saw these records last?

Miss Williams: Yes, I am quite sure I saw them day before yesterday.

Easton: Why are you sure?

Miss Williams: Dean Banks asked to see them.

Easton: Did he give them back?

Miss Williams: Yes, he did. That's what makes it so funny.

Easton: Yes, it is funny. (He turns to the business manager.) It isn't possible that you could help us, is it, Colonel?

Willingham: What do you mean?

Easton: Let us have the list. (The words are spoken without inflection.)

Willingham: Is that an insinuation?

Easton: Suppose it's a demand? (He goes on to the committee.) Mr. Chairman, I want to show that at least ninety per cent. of the so-called Student Activity Scholarships awarded by the university are nothing but free board and lodging for athletes. I demand the record.

Chairman (very much disturbed): Well, the record doesn't seem to be available.

Easton: Is there any possibility that it ever will be? Or will it be necessary for us to examine all the athletes to get this simple information?

Chairman: That I couldn't say. What is the pleasure of the committee?

Pratt: Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Yes, Mr. Pratt.

Pratt: I think this is ridiculous.

Easton: I agree.

Chairman: Mr. Pratt has the floor.

Pratt: What difference does it make if all the scholarships are awarded to athletes? We can't help it if the boys can play football, can we?

Easton: It doesn't make any difference to Mr. Pratt or to the vast majority of the alumni. But it may make a difference to the faculty. I am anxious, Mr. Chairman, simply to know the facts. We can interpret them later. I move you, sir, that we proceed then with the examination of the varsity and freshman players.

Chairman: I'm afraid it would be impractical to summon the boys in just now. It's a little late for that. We will have to put it on the agenda for our next session. If there is no other business, I think a motion to adjourn is in order. (The motion is made, seconded, and speedily carried.)

THIRTY-THREE

ON THE evening after the second session, Richard Easton walked home like an old man. His mind reviewed and contorted the picture of the events of the past eighteen months, the period during which an autocratic ignoramus with no sense of academic values had been chancellor of the university. There was his silly and ambiguous inaugural, clearly dictated by Willingham and dedicated to Hawk, to the effect that government by the board, of the board, and for the board should never perish from the earth. There was his first clumsy move to reconcile the university to the constituency, the removal of Keith from the chaplaincy of the school; and there was his choler and fury over the appointment of Warren by Keith and the subsequent reprimand he had sought to deliver to the dean of the School of Religion.

Other pictures, all of them forming in Easton's mind the pattern of a mad régime, he conjured up and passed in continuous review before him: the affair at Devil's Dam involving prominent athletes and threatening to let the church know the true state of affairs; the doctor's midnight trip to the Federal Building, his childish demand of aid from Judge Buck, his unjustified overriding of the Disciplinary Committee, and the dodge of appointing a special committee to investigate the affair and bring in a whitewashing report.

More and more he had played into the hands of the unscrupulous Willingham and the illiterate Hawk. These two, Easton felt as he kicked a tin can viciously from the sidewalk near his home, had Dickey sewed up and carried off. They had impressed upon him at every turn the fact that he was chancellor and that, therefore, what he said must go; and, though Dickey did not know it they had told him what to say.

Take the organization of the Department of Physical Education. It was nothing but a ruse to hire two of the highest-salaried coaches in the country and give twenty athletes a pretense of work to keep them in school. Whether Dickey knew the significance of this or not he had none the less okayed the scheme

and sold it to the board, and he was now an arch defender of the results. Then, too, Willingham and Hawk had urged upon Dickey an impossible scheme of expansion, all of it in the direction of utilitarian education and business interest. This programme was so consuming that the chancellor's mind was removed entirely from attention to local affairs until some such crisis as the present demanded that he act. And when he acted it was in defense, he believed, of the programme. In other words, Willingham had convinced the chancellor that a great and far-flung programme was the salvation of the school and the making of the administration—and if anything occurred to upset the schemes of Willingham at home, he told the chancellor that his programme of expansion was under fire.

It was all too idiotic to be understood perfectly, Easton told himself. It would take a madman to see all of the factors involved; intelligence was helpless in the presence of such discordant complexity. He was confident that the doctor did not understand it any more clearly than he did, though the doctor, it must be confessed, was nearer mad. Why would it not be a good idea to go to Dickey in his home, sit down like a man, and have a good heart-to-heart talk with him? Easton believed in conversation, and he never quite realized that it was not always effective. He taught his classes in history and politics that if men and women could only be led to talk over their differences, the differences would vanish. . . . And he had no doubt that if the chancellor really knew what was happening behind his back he would be as indignant as any member of the opposition.

With these thoughts in mind he entered his own house, placed on the hall tree the stack of books and quiz papers he was carrying, and went to make systematic ablutions before the evening meal. He took off his coat and vest in the bathroom, hung them carefully on a hook, rolled up his sleeves, and looked carefully at the inside of his cuffs to see if the shirt would stand another day's wear. He found that he had been perspiring copiously.

Why had he been so nervous? Why was he so gravely concerned? Why had he sacrificed his job? For that was undoubtedly what he had done. By his conduct since the new chancellor came he had prepared the way for his exit and it would come soon. His

cue would be the close of the investigation—then he must go out. Out where? To some junior college or high school, perhaps, and then everyone would suspect him of failure and growing infirmity. And he was not infirm. He could teach history. But what did that matter? He was a trouble maker.

At dinner he was silent. He could tell that his wife, an humble woman whom he had taught to obey her husband, fell happily into his mood, and both of them ate their food abstractedly; there was something between them; he felt that she knew what he was thinking and what he had been thinking, and that to tell her would but reflect on her intuition. Yet he wanted to ask her, to ask someone, at least, why it was that he was so gravely interested.

His training had no doubt much to do with it. He was accustomed to academic prestige; he believed that a faculty had rights and that these rights, like the rights of people for self-government, were worth any sacrifice to preserve. What he was doing now would aid and abet the labors of men who came after him in the university. Wasn't Dickey thinking the same thing? Weren't both of them fighting for something that would count in the future, and weren't their ideas and their systems irreconcilable? Perhaps. It was a battle for the government of the school, of all schools. Either the board must govern without consent of the faculty or the faculty must govern—but always and at best with the consent of the board. It was a system he was fighting against, a system of which commercialized and immoral athletics was only a part; yet the battle for the time was about athletics.

Having reached some semblance of a conclusion he felt encouraged and rewarded. With only a word of explanation he left the table without dessert and decided to take a walk. The cool night air buoyed him; it was so unusual to take a walk alone that, although he felt some remorse for having left his wife alone, he left a double vigor at being free to talk and to think and to decide things for himself. He must decide. There was too much confusion. He must think very simply.

Without doubt the university was maintaining a rotten system of athletics; this system had the tacit support of the administration; it was contrary to the ideals of the faculty. Now he must show conclusively that this system was rotten. He must have

a proof more tangible than conviction. He must get his hands on something. He had lost his position. The investigation itself would not get anywhere; there would be another whitewashing report. But if only he could find something, something irrefutable. . . .

His steps had carried him unconsciously in the direction of the university. Outside the administration building he paused. There was a light in the business office. He stepped back a moment to peer into the lighted office. It was far above him, and he could not see. Yet the very wonder gave him a thought. He had already thought of stealing, but the idea he had now was better. Kitty Douglas was one of the few surviving appointees of Chancellor Meacham in any sort of administrative capacity. And Kitty was a friend of his wife's. She had known Mrs. Easton when they were girls, and it was only through the influence of Easton that she had found work just after her husband's death. She had been taken into the cashier's office of the university and later made cashier. For the first time Easton was acutely conscious of the rewards of kindness. He must see Kitty Douglas. He turned and walked down the long drive toward the small row of houses off the campus where lesser employees of the university lived.

On his way, however, the determination which he had expressed earlier in the evening came to him with renewed force. He must see and have one final talk with Chancellor Dickey. He turned suddenly and walked to the executive mansion. Everything that evening had the vagueness of a dream; to-morrow he would not believe or think seriously of what had happened. He paused for a moment, hesitant, and even trembling. Something kept saying over and over to him, "Futility, Futility, Futility!" It was but a part of a sentence he had formed, and the strongest word survived and gibbered at him. With an effort he climbed the steps and rang the bell.

A maid answered. The interior looked stately and smelled of wealth. Was it a social war he was waging, a class war? he wondered as he thought of his own shack off the campus and of his effort over years, now almost realized, to build a good home for his wife and himself. It was not a class war. He had come often

and gladly to this mansion when Meacham was there. It was a war of academic principle.

He had been shown into the drawing room, and he sat tensely now, waiting to see if the doctor would even be at home to him. Whatever he did he must keep his head. He was going to talk things out, sanely, frankly, thoughtfully. He must not, must not, lose his head; he must not lose his head. . . .

A few moments later the doctor entered. He seemed unusually large and physically powerful to-night; there was character of a sort in the fine lines of his face. Handsome. Easton stood up. The two said "good-evening." There was a moment in which they eyed each other carefully, like two savages or animals meeting and deciding whether they would be peaceful or pugnacious.

"Doctor Dickey," Easton began, thinking it would be well for him to commence amicably before the doctor had time to say something nasty, "I owe you an apology for this call."

"Not at all, not at all," the doctor assured him, and for the first time in their acquaintance Easton felt the warmth of courtesy. "I am glad you came by."

Was it possible that the doctor expected him to renege? How should he go about saying what he wanted to say? And what did he want to say? He simply wanted to talk things out. That would settle everything—he might even remain in the university and not have to teach in a high school.

"I came here," Easton said with a certain tightening of his face, and at the same time he felt the atmosphere of the room grow slightly more tense, "to offer a suggestion, and only a suggestion. We are both weary of this investigation. I dislike bickering quite as much as you, but both of us are contending for what we believe is right. I am willing to withdraw from this investigation or act very differently from the way I have acted if you will do two things: first, make a careful inquiry yourself into the way athletics have been conducted in this school and, second, allow the faculty to name a committee to have complete control of athletics in the future. That may seem a large bill, but I sincerely believe it will redound to the good of the institution in the long run."

The chancellor was thoughtful for a moment. "I think your suggestion is utterly impractical, Professor Easton," he said.

"You imply that I do not know the affairs of my own university. It is not necessary for me to make a personal inquiry. I know full well what the status of athletics is, and I am personally convinced that there is no just ground for complaint. I cannot but construe a complaint, knowing what I do, as an attempt to compromise my administration. That is my position, and I do not propose to retreat from it."

"What about the second part of my suggestion?" Easton asked helplessly and with only an echo of his earlier vigor.

"The faculty has control at the present moment. I have done nothing to divest them of that control. I fail to see the necessity of having the faculty pry into athletics and do nothing but make our conduct of sports a public scandal. A member of the faculty passes on the eligibility of all players. That seems to me altogether sufficient."

Easton wanted to remind him that the faculty member had been appointed by the chancellor without the consent of the faculty, but he saw where this would lead him. It would lead to a discussion of Willingham; it would lead the whole conversation into a swamp of emotion. Hope fled. The chancellor's mind was made up and nothing could change it, for any change would signify only weakness and indecision. The two points of view which he and the doctor expressed were poles apart; it should not be surprising that the men who expressed them should talk different languages. He got up to go.

"I had hoped that we could get somewhere with a face-to-face talk," he said.

"I hope you have not found me unreasonable," the doctor replied.

"It isn't that," Easton said wearily. "We stand for different things. We can never understand each other's speech, because we do not understand each other's mind."

The two stood facing each other. For a moment Easton saw in the chancellor's eye a gleam of understanding; for a moment there was a flash of intimacy between them; they were men, and each realized that he had something of the other in him; in another world perhaps they might have been friends. Then it was all over, and the doctor asked with what seemed to Easton almost Satanic insolence:

"May I ask what you stand for, Professor?"

The question cut. It was the torture of the thongs before crucifixion; all was lost now; nothing remained but the dismal end. And it was the professor's desperate longing to be magnificent in defeat that lent eloquence and bitterness to what he said.

"I don't mind telling you what I stand for," and he straightened up perceptibly as he said the words. "But I don't think you'll understand. I stand for a college where something besides skull practice shall be taught, where the reading of books shall have chief part. I stand—and here, Dr. Dickey, we are poles apart—for a college which shall not be forever playing to a stupid constituency with devices and courses calculated to arouse the interest of a populace drunk on practicality. I stand for a college in which the faculty shall not be forced to bow to an absentee board of business men who operate through a hireling to control the college as though it were an industrial plant for the manufacture of widgets and gadgets.

"I hope you will forgive me for being so frank, Dr. Dickey, but I stand also for an intelligent ethics in the conduct of college affairs, an ethics which shall recognize the pursuit of truth as a legitimate undertaking and the cultivation of learning as a worthy pastime. I fear I stand for a college which to you and your Board of Regents would be a shocking failure, but which would none the less turn out happy men and women who could read books and talk of something besides real estate."

He paused for breath and decided he had reached a climax. The chancellor's face was flushed, and he was irresistibly on the verge of speech.

"I think you have stated your point clearly enough, Professor. I'm glad you are so frank to say that the great school which I am working to build would be a failure in your judgment. I can put no construction on your words save one which convinces me that you are working against the best interests of the university: you are, whether you know it or not, daily plotting the failure of the university's programme. I have no time for failure, Professor. I am commissioned to build here and for eternity a school which will stand as a beacon light in the storms of cheap intellectualism, a school which shall have its

solid foundation on the rock of Christian principle and its bulwark in the affections of the people. I suspect, Easton, that you are right when you say that we are poles apart."

Easton bowed his head sadly. As if by common impulse the two shook hands, and without another word save a stiff "Good-night" at the door, the professor went out.

And he knew that as he went out of the chancellor's house, he went out of the university. Well, there was some consolation in knowing that it was all settled, that he had exhausted the last possibility of adjusting the differences between them. There was nothing left to do but to establish the clearest possible case against the present system of athletics.

He found Kitty Douglas at home. She admitted him to the living room with a mixture of friendliness and wonder.

"Where is Edna?" she asked, as though it was not quite safe to entertain the professor without the presence of his wife.

"She stayed home," Easton explained mechanically. He was still in a daze, and he took his chair and answered her question mechanically. "I was just walking by and thought I would stop in." He knew the moment he said it that she would think his visit less proper than ever. Some business twist must be given the conversation at once. He went on: "How's your work at the university?"

She looked at him suspiciously, twitched one side of her face in study, and then replied:

"Pleasant enough."

The professor rocked back and forth in his chair.

"Meacham appointed you," he said.

"Because you asked him to."

"It was Edna's influence. I had nothing to do with it."

"Edna could not have done it by herself."

There was an intermission of silence broken only by the creaking of the professor's chair.

"Dickey is changing everything as quickly as he can," he went on.

"Have you heard anything about me?" Kitty asked, alarm shaking her carefully composed tone.

"Oh, no. Nothing at all. But I'm slated to leave. This commencement, I suppose. I can't stay on."

"Why not?"

"They won't let me. Besides, I don't want to be connected with so much crookedness." He paused as he said this and looked at her with narrowed eyes.

"Edna said you weren't getting on so well, but I never thought it was anything serious."

"Dickey and I can never get along. I have ruined myself in this athletic investigation; I have reached the point where nothing matters but to show up what has been going on, and then I'm through. They're out to get me, you know. And they'll get the rest of Meacham's friends sooner or later."

"What do you need?" she asked simply. It was as though he had asked for a crust of bread and it all fitted in perfectly with the unreal and confused night he was living.

"I need something to show that there has been graft in hiring athletes."

"There's been plenty of it, all right."

The professor's heart bounded. He knew it. He knew it. Why hadn't he seen Kitty before? But she would never have helped him until the last extremity. Now she took on the form of a woman of the mountains—self-reliant, terrible, willing to do anything to help a friend. It was as idiotic as a dream.

"Plenty of it, you say?"

"Plenty. Do you know how much money I've paid out to that Sphinx Harmon in the last ten days? One hundred dollars! That's just from the university. There's no telling what he gets from the rest, but he gets plenty from us. We must have paid him \$3,000 during the year, and he gets a salary of some sort as a physical ed teacher."

Easton's lips were dry, and he passed his tongue thoughtfully over them.

"There are vouchers?" he said.

The woman nodded.

"That's interesting." Something told him that he had better go now and go quickly. It would all be for the best if he got out before Kitty refused to tell him more or to promise . . .

THIRTY-FOUR

IT IS the third meeting of the investigating committee on the Tuesday following the second. The scene is virtually the same, save for a certain appearance of disorder; smoking has been decreed permissible by a secret vote. Dr. Dickey enters a few moments late, but apologizes. No prayer is held. The faces are all grim.

Huddleston: The meeting will come to order. The secretary will read the minutes of the last session of the committee. (Easton stands and reads, placing the emphasis where he thinks it belongs.) Are there any corrections?

Hawk: I don't think it's recorded that I protested against Easton's false interpretation. I'd like to have that entered. These minutes ought to be kept in good order—there's a good deal in keeping books.

Dr. Dickey: I don't think the minutes are as important as the report. Pardon my interruption, Mr. Chairman, but I'd like to say just this word.

Chairman: Say as many as you like, Doctor; we're always glad to hear from you.

Dr. Dickey: The people are getting impatient for a report. They will become suspicious if we dilly-dally much longer. We are just beginning the great effort to raise our endowment. Commencement will be upon us before we know it. I am sure we are all busy men. I simply wanted to make that suggestion. We ought to finish things up this session if that is possible, and I believe it is.

Easton: Shall I enter that request in the record?

Dr. Dickey: Never mind. It's purely an informal suggestion which the committee can act upon in any way it sees fit.

Chairman: I suppose the minutes stand all right as corrected. I believe the order of the day is questioning athletes about student activity scholarships. Will the secretary please call the name of the first one?

Easton: Mr. Chairman, the secretary, as you well know, has no list of athletes who have been awarded scholarships. That

record was declared unavailable last time, and we must now resort to a more indirect way of finding out whether or not the athletes we question have such scholarships.

Chairman: Very well, Colonel Willingham. I believe you summoned the fellows. Will you suggest who we should have in first?

Willingham (jovially): Yes, sir. I think McMeans will do as well as any. (He goes to the door and calls in a brawny Colossus who is wearing a high-school sweater with a huge T on it.) Just sit down right over here, Mac.

Chairman (clearing his throat officially): Very well. Now we'll begin. Suppose we start right around here. Pratt, you shoot first.

Pratt (also clearing his throat): What's your name?

McMeans (grinning and enjoying the sport): McMeans, sir.

Pratt: Oh, yes, I see. Now, Mr. McMeans, I want you to tell the committee whether or not you have at any time ever received any special favors from the university in the way of money or lodging or anything like that.

McMeans: Certainly not.

Pratt: No?

McMeans: No.

Pratt: Are you sure?

McMeans: Yes, I'm damned sure.

Pratt: Very well. Don't get sore. We're simply trying to find out the facts about the fellows around here. I don't believe there are any other questions I'll ask just now, Mr. Chairman. I may think of some later.

Chairman: You're next, Easton.

Easton: Nothing just now. Let Professor Kingfisher examine the witness.

Kingfisher (somewhat surprised, then recovering himself): Where were you in school before coming to the university, McMeans?

McMeans: Tulsa High.

Kingfisher: Did you play football there?

McMeans (pained at this): I was an all-state man for two years.

Kingfisher: I see. Now, how did you come to attend this particular university? Why did you choose it?

McMeans (cautiously): Why, I hardly know. I just liked it. Looked like a good place to learn.

Kingfisher: Did the scholastic standing of the place appeal to you, or what?

McMeans (whirling his hat): I reckon so. Yes, sir.

Kingfisher (it is evident that he is asking the questions to avoid Easton's interference): What did you know about the scholastic standing of the place?

McMeans: I didn't know much of anything. It just looked like a good place to come.

Kingfisher: How many institutions offered you inducements to come to them?

McMeans (his pride getting the better of him): Four or five, I think.

Kingfisher: You hold a Student Activity Scholarship here, do you not?

McMeans: Yes, sir. I think so.

Kingfisher: How did you get it?

McMeans (looking at Willingham): Somebody wrote me about it. I applied and got it.

Kingfisher: You don't remember who that somebody was?

McMeans: No, sir.

Easton (holding up his hand considerably): Mr. Chairman, let us spare the young man any further embarrassment.

Kingfisher (surprised and relieved): That's all.

Chairman: Who is the next athlete, Colonel?

Willingham: Edwin Sims will do.

Easton: Mr. Chairman, I protest. I see no point in our using up precious moments to examine the scrubs. I should like to have Mr. Harmon brought in here for a few questions.

Chairman: I believe you remarked, did you not, Colonel Willingham, that Harmon was called home to the bedside of his mother?

Willingham: That's correct.

Dr. Dickey (starting): But, Mr. Chairman, surely Mr. Harmon is available?

Chairman: I am sorry, Dr. Dickey, but he isn't. I think we had better go on with the investigation. Who's next?

Easton: Did you say the bedside of his *mother*?

Willingham: Yes.

Easton: Mr. Chairman, I understand that Mr. Harmon is reputed to be an orphan.

Willingham (quickly): His father recently married again.

Easton: The family ties have developed rather rapidly, have they not?

Willingham: Mr. Chairman, I don't propose to sit here and have such inferences cast upon me. I don't.

Easton: I am not aware of any inferences being cast on you, as you say. I think it's simply curious that Mr. Harmon, a notorious orphan, should, on the eve of an investigation of his athletic career, be suddenly called to the bedside of his step-mother. I am sure the committee joins me in a feeling of sympathy and mirth. I should like to inquire when Mr. Harmon left the campus, if the "vice chancellor" will be good enough to tell us.

Willingham (with evident heat): If you mean me, that's none of your business. None. I have given a full report and accounting for the absence of—

Dr. Dickey (interrupting): Just a minute, Colonel. I am somewhat puzzled myself. I am of the opinion that Easton is perhaps justified in raising this question in view of the circumstances.

Willingham (amiably): I appreciate. The truth is, I have only Mr. Harmon's word. He called me last Saturday to say that he had just received a message from his home asking him to come at once. In view of the fact that he thought he might be needed for questioning, he called me to say that he would be gone for a few days.

Dr. Dickey: Well, that's a bit different. Though I must confess it's a little strange.

Easton (standing): Mr. Chairman, I propose to show just how strange it is. I had hoped to be able to question Harmon with reference to certain information I have. I thought he might like to defend himself against certain evidence I have, though I doubt that he could offer much defense. What I privately

believe is that Willingham and Leveridge have railroaded the boy out of town until this thing blows over.

Willingham: You lie. I haven't done anything of the sort. Another crack like that and I'll throw you out of here.

Easton: Come ahead. I have just begun.

Dr. Dickey: Come, now, brethren. Remember where we are. Let us behave like gentlemen.

(Willingham and Leveridge are on their feet, and the whole committee has grown tense.)

Pratt: I move you, Mr. Chairman, that we adjourn until we have had time to get in a better humor.

Easton: Mr. Chairman, I have the floor and I intend to keep it. I have certain evidence I wish to offer. If you do not choose to hear it and consider it, I shall see that the public at large has a chance to have it. (Willingham and Leveridge resume their seats, and the professor continues.) I specifically and formally charge that the university has hired Sphinx Harmon's services as an athlete and has falsely sworn that he was an amateur. In support of that charge I have here signed vouchers from the university amounting to \$400 and all of them covering less than six weeks' time. Over and above that—— (He takes the vouchers from his pocket, and Pratt, the president of the alumni, leaps to his feet and makes for the professor.)

Pratt: Thief! You are a slimy, black thief. (He is restrained by other members of the committee, who explain the professor's age and infirmity. Both the colonel and Leveridge evidently join in the restraint and attempt to remind the alumnus that he can see the professor later. But Pratt makes a pass and, before he can be halted, strikes Easton square in the face, grappling with him for a moment and pulling the vouchers from his hand. Coach Huddleston remonstrates, and he and Dr. Dickey pull the strong man off.)

Easton (holding up one hand for quiet and covering his face with the other): Just a moment. I am not through, though I shall probably be set upon and beaten to death in these Christly halls——

Hawk (interrupting): Leave off your profanity.

Easton: It is profanity to call this labyrinth of iniquity Christly.

Chairman: That will do, now, Easton. (He shames the professor and pushes him into his chair.) I am very sorry this has happened. (Willingham and Leveridge are busy trying to pacify the ferocious Mr. Pratt.)

Dr. Dickey: Order, gentlemen! Order! I demand order! (He bangs loudly on the table with his great knuckles and towers above the tumult like an Irish cop enraged by a crowd of street gamins.) Be seated, all of you! This instant! (There is a semblance of order, and the committee sinks into chairs, chattering in subdued tones. Dr. Dickey waits for order and looks solemnly about the room.) I am ashamed and humiliated beyond utterance at this occurrence. I deplore your cowardly and impulsive action, Mr. Pratt. And I deplore, Mr. Easton, your equally cowardly and equally unjustified action in getting these vouchers. I should think you would feel heartily ashamed of yourself!

Easton (holding his jaw and talking from behind a handkerchief): Any shame I feel, sir, is swallowed up in a sea of shame for the graft and corruption prevalent in this university.

Dr. Dickey (impatiently): I don't care to discuss this matter further. This afternoon's performance convinces me that I should be a very poor chancellor if I permitted this investigation to go farther. I formally declare the inquiry closed, and closed at once. You, Mr. Easton, I must ask to resign from the committee and from the faculty without delay.

Easton (on his feet): If I do I'll make this university the laughing stock of America in three days.

Pratt: Aw, sit down, grandpa, before I crack you again.

Dr. Dickey: I need not reply to your threat any more than to say that a thoroughly discredited professor with stolen evidence will not be widely heard.

Easton: The conference will hear me, sir.

Dr. Dickey: And the conference will hear the findings of this committee, too, Mr. Easton. I will see to that.

Mr. Hawk: There you said it, Doctor. Before we adjourn, I demand that a majority report expressing the conviction of the committee that the athletic situation here is above suspicion be drawn and filed with the chancellor.

Chairman Huddleston: All in favor let it be known by saying

"Aye." (There is a volume of response in "Ayes" that would do credit to fifty men.)

Dr. Dickey: That is well. I think that it is most advisable that we wipe our slate clean and begin all over again. If there is no further business, we stand adjourned. (At the suggestion of Mr. Pratt, Smilin' Syd is appointed to draft the majority report, and the committee adjourns. Easton, still nursing his jaw, is the first to leave.)

CURTAIN

THIRTY-FIVE

COMMENCEMENT came on the heels of spring, and the prospect of so gala an event set the university a-twitter with gay activity for weeks ahead. Alma Mater was preparing for the marriage of her young to the world, and no pains would be spared to make the wedding unforgettable. There were the junior girls to be dressed in angel white, and they must have yards and yards of flowers and sprays out of which to weave the daisy chain they were to escort; there were manly junior boys to be groomed as ushers, and they must be sure they had an appropriate suit, either bought or borrowed, for each of the stately occasions; there were the faculty members to be provided with academic gowns of one sort or another, and a great many absent-minded professors had doubtless mislaid theirs or allowed the moths to corrupt them, with the result that they would come up at the last moment and try to excuse themselves from the academic procession; there were sheepskins to be bought from competitive sheepskin salesmen, the wedding gifts of the mother, and to transact the business in hand there were ten dollars in solid cash to be collected from every young man and woman who intended to appear on the platform that sacred day—and since some of them halted at paying ten dollars there was the strong arm of the dean to be used for persuasion; there were programmes to be printed and therefore proofs to be seen and paper to be selected; and since there had to be programmes there had to be speakers, and these had to be chosen with an eye single not merely to their ability to speak, but with some thought of their appropriateness and solemnity; there were rings and pins to be chosen from a profligate display of samples which the nice young man down from the East stopping at the Derrick had to show; and there were invitations to be chosen, too, from the array of samples which the nice young man down from Chicago stopping at the Biltmore had to exhibit.

Really, to attend to these and a hundred other equally important details required the most minute motherly supervision. Dr. Dickey entered lustily into the spirit of the occasion and

declared with enthusiasm that he intended *this* Commencement to be the most impressive the university had ever seen. For, was not the graduating class larger by sixty than it had ever been before? And was not the university, during this season of the year, on exhibit for the inspection of the world? He answered these questions convincingly by conferring with the Committee on the Selection of Senior Class Pins, the Committee on the Senior Issue of the *Lasso*, the Committee on the Seating of the Crowds at the Graduating Exercises, to say nothing of twenty-three other committees on this, that, and several other things.

Fully six weeks in advance of the gala day he had begun, with reason, to plan. He saw to it, by charging the event with the current of his own limitless energy, that no one on the campus could successfully think of anything save Commencement. It seemed an imminent, divine event, toward which the whole university moved.

Thus, when Richard Easton was chosen by the seniors as their class professor, he was all felicitation and took the opportunity to write:

I have just learned of your election by the Senior Class to the distinction of Class Professor. My heartiest congratulations.

It would seem to me singularly appropriate if you could find it possible to act as general chairman of the faculty committee on arrangements. Both the recent honor which the Seniors have bestowed upon you and the venerable and valedictory character of your services in the university fit you for this position.

You will be interested to know that I have taken the liberty of destroying your recent resignation, and I hope you will be good enough to consider this matter closed.

Faithfully,

It was with a certain measure of distress and alarm that the doctor saw the working of his own mind in connection with Professor Easton. It was as though his part had been played by another—someone intimate with the chancellor but quite apart from him. He himself saw all too clearly what must happen, yet he felt powerless to avert it. Easton was a menace; that was the postulate of all the doctor's thinking. Moreover, Easton was a menace to the success of a great cause, one which

demanded to be consummated. Granted those two facts, and obviously any line of action to be rid of the menace would be more than justified in the end. There would never be peace or safety in the university until Easton had been thrown out of it.

So it was that the chancellor's thinking became deliberative. He must dislodge Easton, or his whole work would be ruined. He lamented the fact and even prayed about it, slipping in the clause of Gethsemane, "Let this cup pass." He felt very much like a father who had been called upon to administer serious corporal punishment to an erring son; he really believed that what he was about to do hurt him more than it did the professor.

Indeed, he soon came to the conviction that he was making a personal sacrifice in managing the dismissal of the old trouble maker. For, after all, it would be an exceedingly hard job, and he must do it in a way which would leave no chance for further bickering. If he merely asked for the professor's resignation, as he had impetuously done during the investigation, there would be no end of cause for complaint. The faculty rebellion would spread; the Association of American University Professors—an agency the doctor had heard of with some terror—might even investigate, and the school would get no small amount of bad publicity. He must do what he did quietly and quickly and shrewdly. He faced the challenging and apparently impossible task of getting rid of Easton without noise or commotion.

To accomplish this the first step was clearly to avoid the very appearance of evil. That was why he felt pleased and soothed by the letter appointing Easton to the chairmanship of the Committee on Commencement Arrangements. The act itself would deflect the public from Easton as a villain and establish him favorably with the administration. Moreover, proper attention to Commencement would itself tend to quiet strife until the present semester ended. The board did not meet until Commencement Week, and announcement of their action would not have to be made until the exercises were well over.

Despite the exceptional cleverness of his plan, the doctor was troubled as the hour of action approached. He could not dismiss from his mind, absurd as the idea was, the analogy between himself and a man who commits cold-blooded murder. Did not the

law place the decisive obloquy upon deliberateness and planning? And yet the idea that he was a murderer was so laughable that he could easily dismiss it, and did dismiss it several times each night. He smiled at the thought and found a few moments later that this face was still wrinkled in the form of a smile, while all mirth had left him.

In the excitement of the oncoming celebration the committee appointed to investigate athletics seemed only a minor event of antiquity. When the majority presented their report, it was mentioned in the press as "the findings of a group appointed some time ago to inquire into the eligibility of certain players." Easton presented, true to form, a shrill minority report, which Dr. Dickey, "in view of the best interests of the university," promptly filed in Chairman Hawk's huge safe. But he acknowledged the receipt of Easton's report with a courteous note and justified his action by saying that he "did not wish to compromise the minority professor with the governing authorities of the institution." It was all nicely calculated, and anyone less suspicious than Easton would have got the impression that the doctor, in the hilarity of Commencement, had forgiven the faculty agitator altogether and had become his reverential friend.

II

On Commencement morning the largest class by sixty in the history of the university, sedately robed in black, heard the mayor of Oil City deliver a harangue against radicalism and heard Chancellor Dickey in his annual address dream publicly of a "palladium of thoughtful conservatism." The occasion was unique in many respects, but most of all because it was the first Commencement programme which had ever been broadcast over radio. All of the speakers were a trifle self-conscious, and they shied at the microphone, but Dr. Dickey gained courage as he went, and by the time he had finished, the invisible audience, if they had tuned in too late to catch the name of the university, must have thrilled to think that they were getting Boston and hearing President Lowell.

It was all very impressive, and in the same thunderous tones and reverberating overtones that must have attended the delivery of the Ten Commandments on the crest of Sinai, the doctor

promised to build a "school which time cannot efface nor custom change, a citadel of truth, a bulwark against the rising tide of European radicalism, an ark of Christian sentiment, and a treasure house of human character and divine life."

"I pledge myself heart and soul," the doctor said as he snorted at the smell of the powder of battle, "to lay here on this ground foundations of such durable and everlasting quality that they shall persevere in usefulness like the roads of ancient Rome. And I consecrate myself solemnly to the task that upon these foundations of stone mortared with the blood of generous citizens we shall erect a superstructure which shall tower throughout history, long after the roads of licentious Rome are but the tinkling memories of a forgotten antiquity."

"Let the nations of to-morrow rise up to bless us. That is my prayer. Let generations yet unborn scent the fragrance of the ointment which we pour into these coffers. Let us bow our heads in awe at the grandeur of the task which faces us. Let us so labor, so strive, and so pray that by the diligent zeal of our consecrated effort we shall have indeed and in truth found everlasting peace in granite and eternal life in stone."

Hence, publicly and ceremoniously, in the blare of the flashlights of the press and before the eager faces of the worshipping throng, Dr. Dickey promised with his own mighty voice to build the school that had lived so long in his dreams. And who knew but that somewhere someone among those listening far out in the broad reaches of the radio would hear his dream and touch it with the wand that would turn it into gold?

The next day the chancellor and his sparrow-like wife, relieved of the tremendous strain of executive life, entrained for the East. And the next day an old professor, clutching at the stray letters in the mail box which he shared with a colleague, drew out an envelope carrying the imprint of the university. Gutted by a fright which seemed to remove even his skeleton and leave only his taut skin to support him, he tore open the letter and read:

DEAR PROFESSOR EASTON:

I regret to inform you that the Board of Regents in their recent session voted to retire you from active service in the uni-

versity. The complaint was registered with us that, for no fault of your own, you had ceased to be equal to the strain of constant teaching. In view of the rather strenuous programme ahead of all of us it was thought best to suggest that you leave off your work at the beginning of the next semester.

You may be sure, however, that this step was not taken without the gravest concern on the part of the governing authorities. The fine character of your work in the past is well known and in recognition of it the Regents have voted to grant you an honorarium of \$2,500 a year for the remainder of your life.

Faithfully yours,

HORACE ETHELMORE DICKEY,
Chancellor.

JANET was breaking up her apartment. She was going to teach at Illinois next year. Amon had a fellowship in New York University, and Helen, who would be a junior, had her own apartment planned. Malcolm had called to say good-bye to Janet and to supervise her packing. There had been a rumpus over his degree, and he talked about the affair like a woman just back from the hospital. The doctor had declared flatly that he would not issue a degree to Malcolm Leeds and had stuck to that position until the final session of the faculty voted overwhelmingly to grant it. Then it was found that Malcolm, as a protest against the commercial graft of sheepskins, had not ordered his diploma, and Dean Banks informed him that he could not appear on the stage with the rest of the class. But Malcolm rented his cap and gown, visited the dean to let him know he had it, and on Commencement morning walked across the stage with the others and received a dummy, like the others, from the hands of the chancellor.

"But don't you ever think I didn't put up a real fight for it," he told Janet for the third time. "Yes, sir, I put up a fight for it," he went on as the girl, a towel tied around her head, lifted a framed etching of an ugly tenement off the wall and laid it gently on the divan. Everything was torn up, and the remaining furniture was covered with paper. "And you appreciate what you have to fight for. I always thought that was a bromide until now. But now I believe it is true."

"Most bromides are true," Janet commented.

"Not poignantly true," Malcolm countered. "I mean this is all as real to me now as it can be. Why, I never thought I cared anything about a degree until I had to come right down and battle for it. But now I know what it means."

"Just what does it mean? Here, take this into the bathroom and lay it on the basin," she ordered, handing him a crude piece of Mexican pottery. "And be careful with it. They'll appreciate that up in Illinois."

Malcolm obeyed, coming back a few moments later to tell

just what his degree meant. "Oh, I'll get a job, all right. And I'm gonna get one right here in this town. I'm not goin' to run off like the rest of you." His voice was high in accusation. "I'm going to stick around and see what happens."

"You've already seen what will happen, haven't you? I don't care to spend the rest of my life in disagreeable circumstances. Who wants to stick around just to show he's not afraid? Life's too short for that kind of exhibitionism."

"Maybe you're right about that, Janie." He looked at her with genuine admiration. "Maybe you're right." The repetition was a real concession. "Sedberry's leaving, you know, and Farrell may. I think myself before he got the gate Easton ought to have got another job.

"No," Janet sighed. "He's the kind that sticks it out. He'd wait and see what happened. But the wise ones won't. They know. Dickey won't have to can anyone if he'll just wait a year. The exodus has already begun." She flourished a newspaper at the disheveled apartment. "The good doctor will soon have a faculty recruited from boobs and sucklings and then everything will be lovely."

"Well, I'm not going to stay in the university," Malcolm protested. "I'm going to get a job downtown."

"I know, my dear boy. But you ought to shake the dust of this place off your feet."

"Ah, I don't believe in all this business of flight. We're forever running away from everything in this day and time. Always running away. That's awfully cowardly."

She looked at him in tender pity. "What of it? You've either got to run away or stay where you are and behave. I'd rather stay on the run."

"But how do you know things will be any better up at Illinois?"

"I don't know that they will," she shrugged, "but there'll be a change of scene. It can't be any worse. Things are better the farther north you go," she added sagely.

Malcolm lighted a cigarette and poked the match through the window screen. The apartment, covered with paper, seemed inflammable even to an experienced smoker. "Well, I guess I'd

better be off," he said, sitting down on the papered divan. "I've got to get things ready for the camp. We're off to-morrow."

"Where's it going to be?" Her tone was noticeably casual.

"Up at Cold Springs. It's a swell place, the fellows say. Boating, swimming, fishing, tennis, golf, good food and beds."

"You sound like a catalogue."

"It really is nice," he went on. "And it will be a complete rest, too."

"You are going with Marion." There was the slightest flicker of unpleasantness in her voice, and she wadded up a newspaper loudly and stuffed it down into one of the boxes.

"Yes," he said, walking to the window to flick away his ashes.

"That's rather funny, isn't it—your going with Marion?"

"It's an old date," he said in an offhand manner. "Had it a long time."

"Oh, I see. Well, I'm sure you'll have a good time."

Something in her voice and in his own susceptibility to anything which might be construed as complimentary to himself made him look at her inquiringly. She was leaning over the box, stuffing in paper for dear life. What he saw of her legs above the stocking tops made him feel all the more masculine toward her, and the male in him began to swagger with self-esteem: Janet was jealous; this cynical, impassive creature was jealous. He had moved a woman who had hitherto been immobile among men.

"Oh, I guess there'll be plenty of fun all right," he went on. "We got a swell chaperon, too. Mrs. Stimson. Isn't that a scandal?"

"It's probably the beginning of several. What will Sphinx say of your taking Marion?"

He cleared his throat and flicked the ashes out of the window again to stall for time. It would not be well to tell her that Sphinx had already been sent to Corpus Christi for the summer and that otherwise he could never have had the date with Marion. "I'm not afraid of Sphinx," he said bravely. "After all, she's not married to the big stiff."

"She may be, for all you know."

"Well, she's an adulterous wench, then," he retorted, slightly

hating himself for saying it. "I better go now, Janie," he went on. "I've got a lotta packing to do myself."

"What time will you be leaving to-morrow?"

"Around sun-up."

"Then I suppose I won't see you again."

"I'm afraid not." He stood, awkwardly, near the door. "I certainly hope you have a swell time in Illinois, old darlin'. You'll never know how much I've enjoyed knowing you."

"Will you write me?"

"Sure. I'll be awfully busy as soon as my job starts, of course, but I'll write occasionally. You'll let me have your address as soon as you get settled down for the summer, won't you?"

She had taken the towel from her hair and stood twirling it in her hand. "Of course."

They were facing each other now. For Malcolm it was a curious situation. Both of them had permitted whispers about their conduct—had rather encouraged whispers. They had seen each other freely and at peculiar hours. Yet some fear of her, some sense of her cynicism and superiority—a superiority he had never openly confessed to himself—had always held them apart save for the casual embraces which befitted the behavior of young intellectuals. He had always thought her rather pretty in an exotic way, and he had always known that she was highly provocative and chemical. But that strange sense of propriety so deeply imbedded in both of their essentially respectable souls had kept the affair on a plane of perfect decorum.

It was all confusing and slightly maddening, and now they stood facing each other, alone. All affectation, all sense of restraint had mysteriously disappeared, and there loomed now before them both an event which nothing could forestall. As though drawn by a magnet halfway between them they folded themselves in one long embrace. Malcolm, giddy at the thought of conquest, was aware that the cigarette was still burning in his hand, burning perilously close to his fingers, and that the furniture in the room was covered with paper. Clinching his triumph with a fervent press of the lips, he released her slightly and looked steadily into her eyes. He saw surrender there, but the room was covered with paper, and the cigarette was still

burning perilously in his fingers. Sighing, he kissed her once more, reflecting as he did upon the completeness with which he had subdued her, and with this reflection he suddenly felt entirely satisfied. . . .

II

"Tie this thing, will you?" Malcolm commanded Freshman Barney Rudd the first night out. "And get it right, son," he added executively. He tilted his chin and waited for the freshman to turn a knot to complete his perfect ensemble. There would be a dance that first night in the ballroom of the inn which the K. A.'s had commandeered for a week of hilarity.

"Who the hell brought an extra pair of suspenders?" Brother Ed Slosson stalked into the room, a silk dressing gown flapping around his hairy legs.

"Not me," Malcolm said without sympathy.

"I didn't, Mr. Slosson," the Fish said apologetically.

"You didn't?" Ed glowered at the young initiate. "That's too bad. But, say, kid, you'd look all right in a belt."

Barney winced slightly. He had brought one of the prettiest Pi Phi's from Arkansas, but he said, "Yes, sir, I think I could look all right in a belt."

"You wouldn't look *all right*," Ed corrected, "but you'd be willing to wear a belt, wouldn't you, now?"

"Certainly, sir."

"That's a nice boy. You can make somebody else wear a belt next year," he consoled. "Now, where's your suspenders?"

Barney stopped his operations on Malcolm's tie and fished in a disorderly drawer for his suspenders. "Here they are, sir."

Ed took them without thanks and looked at Malcolm critically. "Hell, boy, you must be the Prince of Wales. Look at all that powder on your face. You look like a corpse."

"I haven't finished yet," Malcolm replied guiltily.

Brother Slosson laughed and went out, slamming the door as he did. Barney finished the tie, and Malcolm turned to finish his face.

"Did you bring a puff, Freshman?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let's have it."

With the borrowed puff he smeared the powder acceptably, adjusted the knot which Barney had tied, put on his coat ceremoniously, and went downstairs. He was to meet Marion on the veranda. He had not seen a great deal of her during the day, but he could not feel discouraged. She had been nice enough, and that was all he wanted as a starter. Softly he repeated to himself, "Here's to you, here's to me; Here's to the girl with a pretty knee. Here's to the boy that buckles her garter; 'Tain't very much but a darn good starter." Inspired by his conquest of Janie, and feeling sublimely primitive in the fresh night air of Cold Springs he made up his mind for the fourth time and repeated the vow to himself as solemnly as Hannibal, that he would seduce Marion or die in the attempt. No, there was no dying in the attempt. It was to be a campaign—clever, well planned, and carefully executed. He did not know exactly why, but he felt that he just had to do it.

No one else had come down yet, save a brother from State who was talking intimately with an over-frilled Phi Mu from Oklahoma. They lowered their voices as Malcolm walked past. Mrs. Stimson was already in the ballroom, talking to members of the orchestra; she spied him and came toddling over.

"You're down early, Mr. Leeds."

He took her hand before he said anything. "And how lucky I am." Then he bent double and kissed her hand.

"Mr. Leeds! I declare!" She was prettily embarrassed. "Such wild and gallant young men as I have under me."

"If your husband isn't prowling, suppose we walk a bit," he suggested. It would do no harm to keep the good will of the chaperon, even if she was a trifle fat and difficult. She giggled and taunted young men like a dowager, and since she had an altogether inane husband in the Spanish department she made an excellent supervisor of morals. To Malcolm it suddenly occurred that, for the sheer sport and accommodation of it, he might seduce Mrs. Stimson.

They walked around the porch talking nonsense. The neck of her dress was very low and he looked at the profligate display of flesh as he talked to her. As they turned he guided her

about with his hand on her back, but the presence of steel and rubber where he had expected silk and softness cooled him. There was something obscene about a corset.

"Who are you with?" she asked him a few moments later.

"Marion Dickey," he replied with a gurgle of pride.

"Oh!" She looked at him respectfully and then smiled intimately, "I'll have to watch you two, I'm afraid."

"I hope so," he agreed fervently.

But Marion and Malcolm did not need watching that night. The dance was decorous and Malcolm managed to have two of the twelve with Marion. He squandered two on Mrs. Stimson, but calculated that there might come a time when his pains would repay him.

III

The week sped on. Tuesday it rained, and the brothers entertained their guests at bridge and mah jong. That night there was an inevitable and gory pillow fight on the upper floor in which the scholars of both sexes took part energetically, until Mrs. Stimson and the management rushed up to stop it. "Children! Children! I'm ashamed of you," Mrs. Stimson panted, and the manager supplemented her shame with a cry of "Here! Here! This will never do!"

At the sight of authority the young people rushed pell mell into cover, ducking indiscriminately into the first door available. Someone courageous threw a pillow square into Mrs. Stimson's uncorseted stomach, and she made a noise like an Indian. In the scramble which followed, Malcolm, kissed by fate, found himself alone in a strange room with Marion; she was panting from excitement and leaning against his hairless chest for protection. "What do you think they'll do to us?" she asked him breathlessly.

"Oh, they'll not touch us, dear," he said, switching off the light and pulling her closer to him. For a moment she melted against him, still panting from excitement. Then she shoved him away.

"Don't, silly. Turn that light back on. We'd be in a pretty fix if they'd find us here."

"But they won't," he assured her fatuously.

"Of course they will. Don't be such an ass."

And she was right. Mrs. Stimson and the manager were coming down the hall, opening each door cautiously and chasing the scantily clad guests back into segregated rooms.

"There they come!" Marion whispered. "We mustn't let them catch us here."

They walked timidly out into the hall, trying at once to lose themselves among the moving guests, but Mrs. Stimson spied them.

"And *you*, Mr. Leeds!" she cried. "I would never have thought it. And *you*, Miss Dickey. Of all things!" She came over and took them both by the arm. "Naughty! Naughty! And you were alone in that room, weren't you?" she asked softly.

Marion flared up, but Malcolm interrupted. "Curses!" he hissed. "We're caught. O King! Spare us, we pray!"

"Now aren't you ashamed?" Mrs. Stimson went on. She was still panting and her hand lay gently and firmly on Malcolm's arm. "You are naughty young people!" And she whisked off.

"Now that's funny," Marion mused.

"Oh, she's not a bad sort," Malcolm observed.

Wednesday was bright and clear. Some of the couples swam; others rowed; still others of a clique within a clique took their baskets and went off for a picnic up in the woods. Marion and Malcolm were among them, but Betty Lou and some strange boy, a brother from Tulane whom she obviously despised, were along, too, and Betty Lou spent all of her time at Marion's heels. Thrice Malcolm tried to shake the haunting couple, and thrice he failed. That afternoon it showered heavily, and toward four the picnickers trudged home, irritable and disconsolate.

Fortune had set her dice against him, and yet he was indiscourageable. On every occasion he treated Marion with the utmost tenderness and respect. At the table he was well behaved. At the dances he was generous to a fault, and when his turn came he danced as gracefully and smoothly as possible. When they were alone for a moment—and it was only for a moment—he

looked at her intimately and took on the most lover-like attitude he could conjure up.

Indeed, he became so serious-minded in his conquest that on Thursday night, as he lay staring wide-eyed at the ceiling and listening in desperation to the snoring of Freshman Barney Rudd, it came to him suddenly that he wanted more than a conquest.

"That's funny!" he said half aloud to himself, cocking his head at a vision of his face in an imaginary mirror. "That's damn funny!" He had supposed that it was all over with Marion; he had kept this date through courtesy and had decided to pay himself and add a laurel to his crown by seducing her, systematically, coldly, shrewdly, and scientifically. And then, too, there was Janet. He had not forgotten her for a moment. There was a great woman, a real woman, above the world and its trials and foibles. But the more he thought of it the more he realized that his tenderness for Janet merely heightened his feeling of sincere affection for Marion.

Life at that moment and for the next hour as he lay and suffered pleasantly was cruelly complex. He could not, he said to himself with great satisfaction, figure it all out. He knew only one thing and that was that he loved Marion. Loved. Loved. He said the word softly to himself and listened to it with critical attention. Yes, he did.

And Sphinx? Oh, damn Sphinx. That big beef trust. What the hell did he matter? He wasn't intelligent. He didn't deserve Marion.

During it all Barney snored sublimely on. Malcolm turned on his side and booted Barney as he turned. There was a grunt, a moment of silence, a heavy sigh, and the snoring began again. Desperately, Malcolm jumped out of bed and lighted a cigarette. He stood by the window as thoughtful as a statesman while he smoked. He must be true to Janet. Yes, he must. But, then, his love for Marion was now and without doubt ninety-nine and four-tenths per cent. pure. Just like Ivory Soap. "Ivory Soap, Ivory Soap, Ivory Soap," he sang the words in the old Martha Sumner custom.

Blushing slightly that his thoughts should still linger about

Janet, he ground the cigarette against the sill of the window and, after inhaling deeply and brainlessly the last draw, went back to bed. He tried to go to sleep, but his lungs hurt him—not very badly but enough to remind him quite pleasantly that he was dissipating and suffering from the effects. He pictured himself dying young—a genius dying young and, thus engrossed, was soon asleep.

Friday it rained. Malcolm hovered about Marion at the bridge table or looked across the room at her with large, tender eyes. Saturday dawned clear and fresh. Saturday was really the last day. Some of the couples would begin leaving that night, and Mrs. Stimson would get impatient Sunday morning and suggest that everyone else get ready to go home. Saturday was the last day.

Malcolm had just finished lunch and was smoking with two of the brothers on the porch when Mrs. Stimson approached the group.

"Oh, dear!" she sighed. "You don't know how relieved I'll be when all of this is over." Then she smiled in a most maidenly way to let them know it was all in fun.

"Why, my dear Mrs. Stimson!" Malcolm protested in great seriousness. "We have been perfectly behaved—all of us!"

"Now, Mr. Leeds!" she crooked her neck and looked at him in a sweetly accusing way.

"Ah, Mal's an awful cut-up," said Fred Stoneham. "You mustn't mind him."

"Isn't he, though?" Malcolm could almost feel her tapping his shoulder with a fan as she repeated, "Isn't he, though?"

She lingered about, talking of the landscape view from the porch until it became evident that she wanted to talk to him. "Shall we walk down to the water?" he suggested.

"Oh, let's."

They were off. "Do you know, Mr. Leeds, I oughtn't to say what I'm about to say." She paused significantly, and Malcolm suddenly had in clear realization what he had suspected vaguely all along: The woman was vulgar; just vulgar. "But do you know, Professor and I found the loveliest spot up in the hills this morning. I'm sure none of the others have discovered it. Professor and I went up there this morning, and do you know,

I felt simply giddy with romance. It's a beautiful place, filled with flowers and soft grass, and there's a place where you can wade, or swim, for that matter."

She stopped abruptly, and Malcolm felt very uncomfortable. What in heaven's name was the woman driving at? Did she want him to take her there? That was possible. She was talking again.

"It's a lovely spot; so nice for young, romantic people. And I just know you're romantic, Mr. Leeds. Oh, I can tell. Let's go back now. I just thought I'd tell you about it, in case—oh, I know how you and Miss Dickey must feel."

They were turning to go back now. He looked at her incredibly, trying hard to keep from his face signs of the strange emotions that gnawed at him. Something obscene, powerful, altogether black and overwhelming loomed up from nowhere and shrouded them. He knew lust that moment, strange, torturing, unreasoning lust, followed and mixed and colored and soured with disgust. It was funny. Her breasts, those breasts that looked so much like an ancestral portrait, were heaving under her thin blouse, and she was blushing. Lust, disgust, pity; he could see and name the emotions as they crowded over him. This poor creature, this wife of an inane professor, wanted to revel in his own romance, wanted to plan it, to find the place for its execution, that she might better dream of its details.

"That's awfully nice of you," he said simply, too simply. "Awfully thoughtful." He wished it were dark that he might give her some token, some trifling token to cover her embarrassment.

"Let's say no more of it," she pleaded. "You follow the creek up to the right until you come to an old block house. There's a path behind it, not very plain. You follow that until you come to the creek again."

Her words rang in his ears like a dirge and a siren's song. It all seemed so perfectly insane that he stopped reasoning about it.

Marion was on the porch. He sat down and dangled his legs from the banister. She detached herself from the group she was with and came over to him.

"I've some great news, bozo," she began.

"What is it?"

"Betty Lou's going in right away. She wanted me to go with her, but I wouldn't." She looked at him for approval.

"Say, that's bully, isn't it?" So fate was in it after all?

"I think so. She's a nice kid and all that."

"Yes, I know, but an awful pest. What say we take a little stroll, then, if Nemesis is going?"

"I'm game," Marion said. "What would you like me to wear?"

Wasn't it like a woman to think always of clothes? But, then, they might be important. "Why not a silk dress?" he suggested.

"Mal, are you crazy? I'd ruin a silk dress."

"All right, wool and bloomers," he conceded. "But get them on and let's be off."

She left him and a few minutes later returned in a short flannel skirt and sweater. The sweater was brilliant red. "That sweater looks like Colonel Willingham's mustache," he commented.

"The skirt's too short. It's an old one. I hope you won't mind."

"Not at all, dear. I think it's just the right length for mountain climbing."

They started, Malcolm leading the way when they came to any choice in paths. Try as he might, he could not keep from him a feeling of shame and guilt. Marion was so pretty, so gay, so innocent, so full of life. But why go on enumerating her virtues? They only made him want her all the more. And why shouldn't he want her? They were young, and love was natural, and life was life, and all that. Besides, there was something so primitive, so elemental about being alone in the woods. They might be deer or something like that.

"What are these?" Marion stopped to examine bright red berries along the path. He looked at her shapely leg, comparing it instinctively and analytically with Janet's, and tried to conjure up the information.

"I think they call them poppy berries," he said.

"Poppy berries?"

"Yeah."

"I don't believe you know. And besides, you are thinking of something else." She looked inquiringly into his eyes, and he blushed.

"Yes, I was. I was thinking," he said with a gust of frankness, "of what a wonderful body you have."

"Me?" she asked modestly, looking uncritically over her shoulder at her legs and hips. "You can see legs any time, Malcolm, when you get to town. But you can't see such pretty berries."

"I don't want to see berries, or legs, any time when I get to town," he said, confused. "I just want—— Say, I do know what that is," he said, pointing to the rock house. "That's an old blockhouse. General Lee is supposed to have stopped there one night."

"Humph! That's nothing. He's supposed to have stopped at every fort anywhere around here. Isn't it funny? Did they actually do any fighting in there?"

"Not much," he said knowingly. "Mostly for protection."

"Your mind's wandering again, Mal. I think you'd better walk in front."

"All right," he agreed, smiling guiltily. "You follow me, then." He led the way past the old blockhouse and started up a scarcely perceptible path to the right.

"Do you know where you're going?" she called.

"I certainly do," he said. "At least, I'm on my way."

The next hundred yards or so were uneventful, and Marion showed mounting signs of disgust. But a little farther on they came to the creek again, and she was gleeful. The creek was prettier here and they followed it around another curve. With every step they seemed to be leaving civilization farther and farther behind, with nothing to remind them of its presence but empty sardine cans and beer bottles.

"This is lovely!" Marion thrilled. "How'd you know where to come?"

"I didn't." His voice was almost shrill in denial, and he went on more quietly. "I just thought we'd scout around."

"I think this is marvelous, don't you?" They were down in the bed of the creek now, walking over rocks and sand until they came to a grassy knoll. All around the sentinel trees stood at attention. A bob-white called as if he had discovered their presence and was taunting them.

"Gee, I'm sort of tired," Malcolm said. "Say," he said as

excitedly as a true discoverer, "there's a hole that I'll bet's deep."

"We might wade," she said, dropping to the grass comfortably and with gentle abandon.

"Let's do," Malcolm said enthusiastically.

She began at once to take off her stockings. He glanced at her timidly; they were rolled just above her knees and he got little reward; then he began to wonder desperately if his feet were clean. "All right"; she was standing now, her white feet rubbing the grass and her toes wiggling with sensation. "Hurry up, slow poke."

He took off his own shoes and stockings, marveling at how much even so little disrobing made him blush, and they stepped into the water. Marion lifted her foot with a pretty cry.

"It's cold," she said.

"Yep"; he was preoccupied again. A moment later she stepped on a rock and leaned against him for support. "I'll hold you up," he said manfully, but his voice seemed but an echo from the far bank of the creek. He placed one arm around her, tucked his pants up around his knees, clutched her own hand as it held her skirt. He would help her hold up her dress, too. They waded on a few moments. She laid her head on his shoulder, and the water raced around their feet. He kissed her forehead, then her eyes, and she smiled at him. They seemed to be drifting sublimely, inevitably, in a current stronger than rushing water. Then from out of nowhere, there came to Malcolm the sudden and silly feeling that he resembled a Baptist minister leading a young convert down to be immersed. Only Marion's soft voice called him back away from reality.

"Let's go back." The words were a challenge, an invitation. He looked at her a moment, then guided her toward the shore. "I thought it would be nice just to sit here on the bank," she explained.

"Say, that would be fun," he agreed. Together they sat down, Malcolm stiffly and shakily. He could not for the life of him decide what move to make next. Her blouse had fallen open away from her throat. By sheer muscular force he managed to embrace her. He pressed her gently at first and then with increasing firmness to his body. He was consumed with a love

altogether pure. Pure. Ninety-nine and four-tenths pure. The words chased each other idiotically through his mind.

"You're sweet," she said, and kissed him warmly. "Terribly sweet." With the words she yielded completely to him, and though he had struggled for a solid week to win this moment it came to him now as something of a shock.

IT WAS the end of July before the chancellor returned. He had visited the principal schools of the East, and had stood baffled and inspired before their gorgeous displays of architecture. He had stood with bowed head and inflated soul in the famous Harvard yard, looking out through the trees and listening to the impotent surf of the city without. He had even been granted a few moments with President Lowell and had found him a little difficult though surprisingly democratic. Harvard's memorial library impressed him indelibly, and he said to Virginia en route to New York from Boston that he thoroughly intended to build one just as big in Oil City. Columbia struck him as a school without a soul, and President Butler entertained him as if he did not understand the reason for the visit, but, standing on the steps of the library there, he looked with the pride of a baron at the view on every side, and, having heard the chimes of a near-by church play their dirge of time, he resolved that a clock with melody in its belly was one of the clamant needs of his own school.

Thus he went, here and there, gathering properties which his own institution must have through the grace of his relentless effort. As never before he felt called of the Lord to his task, and, as never before, he saw the urgent necessity of enlisting Arthur King in the ranks of the country's leading educators. At no point on his long and purposive itinerary had he been more solemnly awed than at the University of Chicago, where "the grandeur of the ancients seemed merged with the enterprise of the moderns," as he determined to say when the first chance presented itself. Secretly he carried away with him the passion to build a library as great as Harvard's and to have in its main reading room the same effect he had seen in Chicago's—a portrait in gorgeous colors of himself looking far across the immense room at a slightly less gorgeous portrait of Arthur King.

It was really too thrilling to contemplate, and he champed at breakfast his first morning back like a fine stallion champing at a restraining bit. At nine he was in his office, marching with

well-trained fingers through the mail that had accumulated in his absence. He had dug as many as fifty letters out of the basket when the peculiarity of the penmanship of a note written in green ink struck his attention. His eyes bleared with intensity as he made out the first line:

DEAR SIR:

Why don't you come out and see me?

Clutching the letter closer to his face, he read on:

What was that you said about eternal life in stone? or what was it? I heard you on the radio last week. I think it was you. I'm an old man and I don't remember mighty well. . . .

Hastily the doctor turned to the inside of the folder and read the scrawled signature. It was the signature of Arthur King. He did not finish the letter but reached instead for his buzzer and continued to press it long after panting Maizie, her face ashen and her eyes large with terror, rushed in. The doctor eyed her with heartless persistence as she crossed the room, and kept his eye fastened to her face as he released the buzzer and pointed to the letter on his desk.

"Why did you not acknowledge that?" The tones were large, full, and even. Every word was italicized.

Maizie trembled and looked at the scrawled note. She could not have explained if she had known at what he was pointing.

"Sit down," he commanded, "and take this note. To Arthur King, Esquire, 'My dear Mister King. Through the stupidity of the woman who does my stenographic work, your note of'"—he glanced at the date and said the words with emphatic deliberation—"June twentieth has gone unacknowledged. I have myself been out of the city for over two months and have only this day returned. Forgive me. I shall be only too glad to call on you at any time of any day you suggest. Please command me.'" To Maizie he added: "I want that letter in two and a half minutes." And he took out his watch and, after a careful look at the second hand, placed it on his desk.

She toddled out as fast as her bowed legs could carry her, and the doctor leaned back in his chair to glower after her until she

closed the door and then to glower at the world in general and to bewail a fate so mischievous and perverse. What if King had died meanwhile? June twentieth. By now he might have had the money and have put the school on a firm footing. He catapulted himself from his swivel chair and gazed helplessly and longingly out of the window like a prisoner. In thirty seconds less than the stipulated time Maizie returned with the letter. He signed it in his most muscular flourish, and at last appeared to turn his attention to other matters. But everything he did until he had King's reply would be done only in an effort to pass the time away.

II

The vast grounds comprising the Arthur King estate had once been a truck farm several miles from Seaton, and the acreage which he encased with thickly set locusts and a heavy rock buttress remained for several years somewhat removed from the haunts of the common citizenry. Then the encroachment of civilization began, and King, choosing to fortify rather than to move, bought up all the land for a block on every side of him. Incidentally it accrued for him a mounting profit, but primarily he held it because it gave him distinction and freedom from the annoyance of city life.

There wasn't another show place in Oil City that gave natives or gaping tourists half as much kick as the Haunted Palace. That was the name given it first by the barker on a rubberneck bus and, since the man who lived there was a man by the name of King, the community thought it rather good, and it stuck. On a little knoll near the center of the grounds the house lifted its ugly head above the surrounding locusts, a head with horns and spirals and, at night, with glaring eyes. For, every night as long as the oldest inhabitants of the neighborhood could remember, there were lights in two widely separated windows at the front—two round windows that looked out like the eyes of a panther through the forest. On nights when the moon shone there was something half-benevolent about these eyes in the center of a twisted and fantastic set of towers, but on nights when the fog hung over the countryside, shutting out everything but the barest outlines of the trees, they glinted like the eyes

of a half-mad god in the form of a beast. First the swains who lived near by and later the clerks testified that they had never seen the eyes closed for a moment save when a shadow flitted across them, one at a time. . . ,

So persistent had become the rumors of the place that it is doubtful if the privacy of Mr. King would have been disturbed had he released the land for sale on every side of him. No one cared to be closer; even in the daylight there was something a little odd and unhealthy about the grounds and the Haunted Palace. The slope which led up to the front of the house, for instance, was barbered weekly with the utmost care by an old man who drove a placid mule attached to a lawn mower. In the geometric center of the slope stood a fountain spurting crystal water through the bared fangs of a Lobo wolf, and around the fountain there was a circular bed of carefully tended cacti. But on the edge of the driveways which led from forbidding and invulnerable gates on either side of the grounds the grass plot stopped abruptly, and the rest of the place was a curious wilderness, sprouting innumerable locust bushes and overrun with a strange kind of thistle. This thistle clambered over the walls along the sides, and jack rabbits and cottontails skirted here and there, scurrying into the estate when a car passed along the road. In the back, behind the garages and the servant houses, the grounds led over a rollicking brook, the only live thing in that region, except for a pen of slinking coyotes which howled mournfully on lonely nights.

During the first ten years of its standing the eeriness of the place smote with fear the hearts of those who dwelt about it. And not even the gradual recognition of the fact that Arthur King was far and away the richest man in the countryside, a man of lordly wealth in a community of oil millionaires, quite allayed the uneasiness of the populace. But it helped considerably. When men of obvious importance were registered in downtown hotels as being from New York and were known to pay long calls at the Haunted Palace, and the frequency of their appearance began to amount to a pilgrimage, the rumor got out rapidly that the Haunted Palace was one of the most famous financial star chambers in the land. It began to be thought, indeed, that Mr. King had built his mansion pur-

positively in so strange a way the better to disguise his international importance. Certainly a man as rich as he ought to be allowed certain eccentricities, the serfs reasoned. And when on Thursday mornings the forbidding and impregnable gates of the estate swung open and Arthur King, ensconced like a true potentate in the back seat of his 1908 model Pierce-Arrow, rode down for his regular conference with the banks, the housewives peered out the windows along the road with more respect than fear. Yet, with all their respect, the peasants remained confused and unsettled. There were those eyes and those coyotes. . . .

Mr. King had a peculiar weakness for those coyotes. They were his one outdoor diversion. Even on summer nights he would sit for hours alone in the musty sepulcher of his study, gazing absently at the mounted buffalo head above the mantel or else twirling abstractedly the rowel of a silver spur he held in his hand, occasionally lying back and running it up and down his sunken chest or through the matty whiteness of his hair; or else he would scratch his beak with a point of the spur and then twirl it viciously and watch it intently until it stopped. He would seem entirely unconscious of the room about him or the world outside until the long, wavering howl of a coyote would sliver the stillness of the night. When it did the little man sat rigidly in his chair, his eyes lifted and taut as if to assist his ears in the experience of listening; and when it was all over there was a cackle in the sepulcher as if a corpse had laughed; then he sat back and relaxed, as if only occupying himself until the slinking wolf howled again.

Thus he passed his evenings, varying the performance occasionally to include reading from a large, anciently bound volume which he selected with meticulous care from among the books in the glass case on either side of the fireplace. At a given time every night an old man with dangling sideburns would step silently into the room and, holding a cape and hat, announce: "It's now eleven, sir."

"Eh?" Arthur King would look up startled and dumbfounded every night of the world, as if he found it utterly impossible to imagine its being eleven. Then he would get up wearily and hand his silver spur to the butler and throw the cape around his shoulders, taking his hat with measured dignity. He re-

mained uncovered until he stood for a moment before the mustang wrought in bronze, a huge, snarling, muscular beast of the plains which seemed to have been petrified by the artist in its greatest moment of wild ecstasy and freedom. Every night he mumbled something before the bronze stallion, and, putting his hat ceremoniously on his head, walked out through a back passageway to the coyote pen.

Once at the pen he fastened his fingers in the wire and stood hanging on the cage like a monkey, staring relentlessly at the animals which slunk in the inimitable manner of their tribe to farther corners and eyed their master with that strange mingling of fear and longing of which they alone are capable. At times Arthur King would hang on the screening and laugh like a small boy at the zoo to see them scamper with their tails between their legs, moving restively here and there, only half stopping when they stopped at all, caught in grotesque positions like madmen caught in ice. And after he had stood before the pen for half an hour and walked back toward the house, one of the beasts would howl, and the master of the Haunted Palace would pause, transfixed and frozen in his tracks, terror obliterating the human features of his face. When it was all over he would cackle softly, attempt to mimic the scream of the coyote, cackle softly to himself again, and return to his house.

III

It was well into August before the doctor's appointment with Arthur King ever took definite form. But one night in the midst of the dog days, just as the heavy mugginess of the tropical afternoon had begun lifting from the streets, he drove, sitting in the front seat with his new chauffeur, to the Haunted Palace. As they approached the estate along the street which led up to the center of it, he noted that one of the eyes was dark, and, save that he was keyed to the highest pitch of imagination both by the rumors he had heard and the prospect of a financial killing for higher education, he would have thought nothing of it. As it was, he consciously and wilfully thought nothing of it.

The gate leading into the grounds was securely locked. John

honked, but there was no response. Then, at the doctor's suggestion, he got out and prowled about until he found a button. Pushing this, the two men heard a clamor in the distance, and after a few moments of suspense they saw a man coming down the drive carrying a flash lantern. He peered out through the bars of the gate querulously.

"Tell him what we want," the doctor commanded, nudging his hired man into action. The chauffeur made it known that his master, Dr. Dickey, had an appointment with Mr. King. As though reluctant, the man with the lantern opened the gate, holding it to one side as the chancellor's car passed through. He stood on the side of the drive which Dr. Dickey passed, and the doctor felt a chill of fear creep up and incapacitate him as he realized that the man was behind him. Then he heard, as though it had been the crack of doom, the click of the iron lock as the gate swung to again.

"Shall I come back for you?" the driver asked as they drew up under the colonnade in front of the house.

"No. You wait right here until I get back," the doctor ordered, his troubled state of mind betrayed by the unnecessary force with which he whispered. Then, grasping his lapels firmly and rising to his full height, he walked up the steps and rang the bell. A butler in worn livery and sideburns greeted him, standing squarely in the crack made by the opening of the great door.

"What is it, sir?"

The doctor trembled involuntarily, thought of his self-control, and trembled all the more. Try as he might, he could not for a moment force words through his mouth. Then he said:

"Is Mr. K-King in?"

"I have forgotten your name, sir."

"Dickey. Dr. Dickey."

"Oh, yes," the butler relented. "The master will see you in the library. I'll say you are here."

Relieved of his hat and a part of his fears, the chancellor stepped into the musty sepulcher of the library. Its walls, be-decked with the trophies of the frontier, towered toward the ceiling, which seemed far enough up to be the sky. The room was insufferably hot and held an odor of immaculately con-

cealed filth. The doctor noticed the mustang wrought in bronze and at the same time heard the deathly howl of a coyote without. Laying a strong mental hand on every nerve center of his body, he sat down in one of the leather chairs and tried to keep from sweating. The effort broke the dams of his pores and unloosed streams of perspiration. For a moment he was seized with the weird conviction that he was fainting; he reached for his collar and found that it had wilted. Nervously he got up and walked about the room, ostensibly inspecting its furniture and trophies, but thinking furiously all the while about his predicament. What if he should be murdered?

He did not know how long he waited, but just as he was on the verge, or told himself he was on the verge, of dashing out the door and letting the university's future go hang, there was a voice behind him—a voice or a strange laugh, he did not know which. Wheeling, he saw before him a wizened little man in Palm Beach clothes, with hand either outstretched or uplifted.

"Mr. King?" he demanded desperately

"None other." The tone was cordial enough, and the hand apparently was outstretched. The doctor seized it and found that it was cold but firm. "None other," the little man repeated. His eyes, their pupils small as beads and cloudy blue like bruised skin, roamed intently over the doctor's face. "Now you've seen me," he muttered with the slightest imitation of a smile, as though he had said something further to himself. "Won't you be seated?" It was a genuine inquiry, and something about it indicated that he didn't care whether the doctor sat down or not.

"I got your note," the chancellor explained, his great bosom heaving like an opera singer's. "I'm from the university."

"University." Arthur King seemed to be thinking furiously. "Go sit down yonder," he ordered. He pointed with the gesture of an executioner to a chair in the center of the room. The doctor obeyed; he heard behind him a strange rattle, preceded by what he thought was a laugh, but he dared not look back until he had sat down. When he did look, Arthur King's face was solemn as a gargoyle's. He had picked up a silver spur from the base of the mustang in bronze and was twirling it thoughtfully. Patiently the doctor waited until he had sat down in a chair some

feet away; it was evident that Arthur King had forgotten the purpose of his call or the fact that he had ever invited him.

The two sat there desperately silent, Mr. King rolling his silver spur up and down his leg indifferently, and the doctor racked by the confusion of being both hot and frozen. He wanted madly to say something, but he could not think of it. Out of the night came the withering yowl of a coyote, long, blood-curdling, sickening—the cry of a beast lonely for something it could not name, a cry that seemed to turn the world into an alien haunt of gnomes and vampires. The doctor found to his terror that he could not so much as move a single muscle by the combined force of his will; his eyes stared in the direction they were fixed as the wail began, and he could not see Mr. King at all clearly, yet he was sure the man moved, and he was fairly sure that he laughed. A moment later the wizard spoke:

“Pretty, don’t you think?”

“Oh, yes. Beautiful,” the doctor replied with an amiability and deceit he knew bordered on idiocy.

“I like ’em,” King went on. “They’re my pets. Ever been on the plains?” he asked sharply.

“Never. Only a little. That is, not much. Just a time or two.”

“Then you don’t know.” This seemed to sadden Mr. King. “I’m sorry you don’t know. If you ever slept in an arroyo on a night when the stars were shamelessly exposed and never heard the rhapsody of hungry, lonely wolves, coming nearer and nearer”—he sat forward, entranced in his own imaginative account—“and felt your own heart damage your chest with its beating and known that those beasts who cried so piteously were as lonely and afraid as you; if you never felt the chill that you could not unshackle—Oh, ho-ho, you——” He fell back into his chair and covered his face with his hands.

“It must be great,” the doctor said so weakly that he was scarcely sure he had said it.

Something in the experience had unleashed the millionaire’s faculties. He turned with measured calmness to the chancellor and said:

“You have a Christly college, don’t you, brother? You don’t mind if I call you brother?”

"Oh, not at all. Not at all. I'm pleased, Mister—er—Brother King. Yes, we have a college with a fine Christian atmosphere. It's really a university, you know."

"What's the difference?" Mr. King was suspicious—he was beginning to do business now.

"Well, you see, a college is only a part of a university. That's about the only difference. We have a College of Liberal Arts, a College of Medicine, a College of Commerce, Law," he watched the rich man's face narrowly, as narrowly as he dared, but it showed no emotion at the mention of law, "and all taken together they make the university."

"Now, then, all these colleges—funny arrangement, isn't it?—all these colleges, are they under your control, too?"

"Oh, yes. My administration correlates the work of the whole university."

"You must be a very important man. I am sorry I have forgotten your name. You will pardon me. My memory isn't as good as it was once—I can't remember when—but once."

"My name is Dickey, Horace Ethelmore Dickey," the doctor replied, sopping the sticky perspiration from his face with a handkerchief already as wet as a dishrag.

"Yes. Now I've got you straight. And I wanted very much to have you straight, my dear fellow, for I think you and I can work together. Would you like for us to work together?"

"I would like nothing better, Mis——Brother King."

"Call me what comes easy. I don't blame you for not calling me brother. I have never done aught for your God—and mine." Something of the sadness of the coyote seemed to steal over him again. The doctor realized madly and of a sudden that King looked like a coyote. King was going on, and what he said now seemed but the plaintive howl of the prairie wolf.

"You know I said I couldn't remember as well as once. Do you know"—his tiny eyes were leveled at the doctor's large ones, but they looked through them and beyond—"that I sometimes fear other people won't remember, too. Eh? I mean, I'm not Methuselah—wasn't that his name?—and I can't live indefinitely. No, thank your God—and mine—I can't live indefinitely. I thought I'd like to live in stone. In stone!" He had risen now, and the last words were almost a shout. He was walking to the

mustang wrought in bronze. Tenderly he laid his hand on an uplifted hoof; his head was bowed in a moment of tranquil silence, then he turned fiercely upon the chancellor. "You see! You see! He lives! He's alive!" He drew back as if afraid the stallion would paw or trample him. "Man can live in stone, if horses can. You asked for bread, but I'll give you stone," he muttered, seating himself once more and twirling the silver spur abstractedly.

"I think I see your point of view," the doctor said thoughtfully, but the millionaire paid no attention to him. "It's magnificent."

There was another intermission of silence, broken only by the rattle of the silver spur, the crowing of a cuckoo clock somewhere in the vast house, and other noises which the doctor did not dare catalogue. Mr. King appeared to be waiting either for the coyote to howl again or else for some great decision to take form in his mind. At last he got up and took from a whatnot in one corner of the room a rumpled piece of paper, unfolded it, and smoothed it out carefully. The tone he used when he spoke again was sane, deadly sane, the tone of a man of affairs in business.

"I should like to make a donation of, say, the greater part of my fortune to your university. I do this advisedly and after much thought and consideration."

To himself the doctor said gently, "I knew all along that man had good sense." Aloud he said: "I can assure you, sir, that no place could your money be more profitably spent."

"I dare say not," the man who feared to be Dives went on. "I have called you here to talk this over tentatively. The money which I give will carry with it no unreasonable conditions. The vast bulk of it may be spent at the discretion of the administration and in those channels where it will produce the most good. I shall ask for one consideration only." He paused and his memory seemed flitting again.

"What is it?" the doctor asked eagerly.

"That my name," the donor hurried on as if he must say so much before his faculties escaped him again, "be wrought in stone. I don't care how. I don't care what. I don't care. You can say. You can say. But there must be one building, to cost five million dollars—five million dollars!—I say. It must be called for

me. It must have a vast foyer ; there must hang my picture ; there must stand this bronze stallion ; there must stand a statue to a coyote, done without thought of expense. That's the only consideration an old man asks. What do you say?"

"Agreed," the doctor said readily. "I can't think of anything happier than to commemorate your benevolence in such a monument. A monument in lasting stone which shall stand throughout the time of man."

"Tell me, then, preacher, dost thou think I have eternal life?" His eyes were glinting again now, but the words were spoken in deadly earnest. The doctor hesitated, wavered on the brink of uncertainty, and spoke :

"As near as any man, sir, you will have it. God cannot overlook the grandeur of your sacrifice, a sacrifice which will produce Christian citizens throughout all the days to come."

"Enough! Enough. Let's hear no more. My lawyers will take this matter up with you. The gift will be twenty millions in all. Five of these will go to Arthur King in stone—my gift of eternal life—and three, with your permission, to a special fund. That's good, isn't it? And the rest will come in due time, in due time, I assure you. It's been nice to see you."

The doctor rose, edging to the door before Arthur King could renege. The butler with dangling sideburns brought him his hat and then withdrew. Arthur King followed him as he backed toward the outer exit.

"Brother King, I can never tell you how much good you have done to-night. The angels in heaven can't begin to calculate it."

"Tut! Tut! It's nothing. But, tell me, preacher, do you think I have gained eternal life?" There were terror and sadness in his voice, and his eyes looked searchingly, satanically into the doctor's heart.

"You have blessed this world and gained another," the doctor said, nonplussed and pityingly. He held out his hand. Mr. King took it and held it in his cold clutch. Then the doctor, as though fleeing the wrath to come, went out, and the door closed behind him. He thought he heard a laugh, a long demoniacal laugh, or was it only one of those coyotes?

THIRTY-EIGHT

FOR the next two weeks the doctor skated on thin air. He dared not breathe a word of his mysterious pilgrimage even to Virginia, though she pecked at him constantly.

"What did he say?" she asked that night after his return.

"Nothing much," the doctor said, swelling up in forbidding reticence.

"Nothing at all?"

"Nothing I am yet in a position to tell."

"Not even to your wife?"

"My dear," he was consciously patient, "don't press me on the matter until I know what I'm talking about."

"Very well. But it does seem you could hint at something."

"Well, I can't."

"Then, don't."

"All right, I won't."

So there was nothing said about that visit—which he remembered and dreamed about in terms of silver spurs and bronze stallions and the howl of a lonely coyote. He was going to be exceedingly shrewd about it all and wait until Mr. King's attorneys had sent him formal word. Then he would call Mr. Hawk on the 'phone and have the time of his life.

But the days passed tantalizingly. Each morning he fingered through the letters on his desk, his eye eagerly searching for a letterhead bearing the name of Boynton & Rice, attorneys for Mr. King. And each day when the sacred letterhead did not show up he became increasingly irritable, and everything wrong began to pile up. It was hot in August. Once it occurred to him as he wiped the perspiration from the circumference of his neck that he might go mad like a dog. Ink spilled when he signed his letters, and Maizie, using the prerogative of her caste, glowered at him. He caught his coat on the arm of his chair and ripped it. Everything joined the league of fate against his high purposes, and he became unreasoningly, bitterly worried over every detail of his private and official life.

Had it not been for his partial dementia and the consequent

sharpening of his powers of suspicion, he would probably have thought nothing of Mrs. Dickey's sudden inclination, during the last week of August, to bundle Marion up and take her to visit a maternal aunt in Dallas. Marion had spent the greater part of the summer away from her parents, visiting with friends on the beach at Corpus Christi. Since her return to Oil City she had seemed to her father rather worn and peaked. He had spoken to his wife about it, but Virginia seemed disposed to treat it lightly:

"It's nothing, Horse, I'm sure. Nothing but the heat."

He supposed that everyone was entitled to be disagreeable in August and for that reason seemed willing enough to accept Virginia's diagnosis. Yet there was something about Marion's behavior he did not like—a curious kind of sadness. He missed her jollity and her manner of kidding him about running the university. As the days passed she grew increasingly pale and nervous until, returning one afternoon from the office, the doctor found her sitting on the front porch dressed for travel. A handbag sat by the door.

"Why, where are you going, Daughter?"

"We're running down to see Aunt Anna for a few days, Dad. This heat is driving me wild."

"It has been hot," he agreed. "The janitor said it was 110 this afternoon. Is Mother going with you?"

"Oh, yes. We're both going. She's going with me."

The doctor was panting and perspiring from his walk in the hot sun. "I suppose you wish you had stayed at Corpus, don't you, Daughter?"

Marion flushed slightly. "Yes, I do, Dad. It was nice down there."

"Yes, I guess it must have been." He wished heartily that he could get her in her old mood of friendliness again. She had not been the same since they left her in June. "Did you have any fun at the camp?"

"Oh, yes." The answer was vague, courteous, and abrupt. "I had a fine time, Dad."

The doctor bit his lip and sponged his brow with his handkerchief. "You and young Harmon are pretty good friends, aren't you?" He wanted to tease her, and that was his way.

"Pretty good, Dad. Why?"

"Oh, I was just interested. Were you with him at the camp?"

Marion hesitated a moment. "Sure. He's a nice boy, Dad."

"Oh, I'm sure he is."

He paused as if there were other questions he wanted to ask, and then went upstairs. Mrs. Dickey looked up startled, he thought, when he passed the door of her room.

"Oh, Horse! I'm glad you came. I've been too busy to 'phone you."

"What's the matter?"

"Why, nothing's the matter. Marion and I are running down to see Sister for a few days. You won't mind. It's terribly hot here, and Marion hasn't been feeling any too well since she got back, and I thought the rest would do her good. It really will be nice."

He was noticeably piqued by her plan, and he seemed on the verge of asking all kinds of questions. He thought it sufficed to say, "Dallas isn't any cooler, is it? Dallas hasn't any reputation for cool summers, has it?" Then he added quickly, as if to cover up his sarcasm, "Does your sister know you are coming?"

"Oh, yes. She called us this afternoon, you see. She says it's nice and cool down there. Goodness knows, I'll be glad to get out of this heat."

Something about her manner—perhaps it was her agreeableness—gave him the conviction that not all was well with the intended trip. But he said nothing further and, like a good husband and father, helped them to get off. Possibly Anna was going to have a baby; women were queer about those things, but, even so, why shouldn't Virginia have told him?

John drove Marion and Virginia to the five-twenty-three, and the doctor ate his meal alone and in silence. He could not shake his sense of uneasiness; a vague, almost maniacal suspicion occurred to him with satanic persistence. He did not know quite what to suspect, but he was in a state of mind to suspect something. He brooded along indefinitely until Sarabelle brought his dessert. He devoured one serving and rang for another. Nothing could affect his appetite.

"You have more, I suppose?" he said democratically to the maid.

"Yas, sur. I was jest thinkin' when I served you befo' that

they sho' would be plenty left. Miz Dickey ordered it this mornin' 'fo' she knew she was goin'."

"Oh, she didn't know it this morning?" the doctor asked involuntarily.

"No, sur. See, she called up her sister and axed her if she could come. Said it was terribul important." These last words Sarabelle said with the éclat of a Congressman; she was clearly delighted to discuss affairs of state with Chancellor Dickey.

"Then her sister called back this afternoon?" The doctor seemed very casual.

"Yas, sur. Yo' got it straight. That's what happened. I reckon Miz Dickey explained everything to you."

"Oh, yes. Everything."

That ended his democratic chat with the cook, but it served only to start anew his curious chain of suspicions. Why had Virginia and his daughter gone so suddenly to Dallas? Well, what were the possible, the imaginable reasons? This question engaged him until he had abstractedly read the evening paper and still bothered him along in a pleasant sort of way as he went out on the veranda to sit.

He had reached no conclusion satisfactorily gruesome when John returned from the station. The knowledge that he was a free man for the evening gave him the inspiration of calling on Judge Buck. He dismissed his chauffeur with a generous "good-night" and drove in the direction of the judge's residence. He was driving absently through the campus when a big new car overtook and passed him, then pulled into the curb and signaled for him to stop. It was Colonel Willingham. The doctor got out and walked back to greet his lieutenant.

"How do you like 'er?" the business manager asked eagerly. He was fairly gurgling with pride, and it was not by accident that he referred to his new car as a she.

"It's a beauty," the doctor said enthusiastically. "When did you get it?"

"Only this afternoon. I didn't much want to buy, but the wife was crazy about it, so I thought I might as well get it."

"Splendid-looking machine," the chancellor appraised with a ring of authority in his voice and felt of the tall gear rod to give evidence that he was inspecting it minutely.

"'Tisn't bad," Willingham agreed modestly. Then, as if the inspection had been the only motive for his stopping, he slapped the steering wheel impatiently and said, "Well, I promised the wife I'd take her for a drive, and I've got to go over and see Doc awhile first. You know," he went on enthusiastically, "I saw the prettiest workout this afternoon I have ever seen on a football field. The boys are out at Lake Shubert, you know. Couldn't you go out there to-morrow?"

"I think I could. The folks are away."

"Is zat so?" He was on the verge of asking where they were, but his memory of the workout got the better of him. "There is absolutely no doubt about beatin' Tate this year. I never gazed on such form. They're like a well-trained chorus, Doctor, and Sphinx—Sphinx—say, that man's a marvel. You must see him punt. He never was in better shape.

"Do you know what that fellow did this summer? He spent the whole time as a lifeguard down at Corpus—right out in the open all the time—just to keep in trim. Say, but he's black. You oughtta see that guy stripped."

"Stayed down there all summer, did he?"

"Yes, sir, and out in the sun every day, swimming and diving and keeping in trim."

The colonel passed on to lesser members of the chorus and a moment or so later drove off with hearty ado. The doctor resumed his drive to the residence of Judge Buck, but he drove blindly, and a daring and absurd suspicion had begun to take root and assume reality in his mind.

II

It was this suspicion, this unreasoning conviction and fear, that made his visit with the judge essentially unreal. He had the impression as he drove wearily back to his own home that he had slept and dreamed of the call. He did remember that the judge was sitting on his veranda fanning himself desperately, that his collar was undone and his usually neat and tidy manner had been discarded for some relic of comfort on an August day. He remembered also that Shep panted horribly and that a fear of his going mad and biting both of them had seized upon him. But

these *récollections* were in the nature of indefinite memories of what had occurred while he slept; into them his memory of the judge fitted congruously. The judge looked very bad, almost like death, and his suavity had departed from him. He had said few things to make the doctor laugh and many things to make the doctor wonder if he was at all happy. But why should anyone be happy to-night? It would have seemed a mistake for anyone to be happy when he himself felt so miserable. . . .

On the whole he thought little of the visit and much of Marion. Once at home, he began rapidly to undress. Marion's room was across the hall and it was forbiddingly silent. For some unaccountable reason he crossed the hall in his night dress and closed the door of her room, arrested for a moment before he shut it, trembling with an *ague* of tenderness and fear. Involuntarily he opened it again and flashed on the light. The closet door was open, and her dresses were hanging neatly in a row; the bed was made up but it was wrinkled—she had lain there during the hot afternoon. Returning to his own room he knelt in prayer by the side of his own bed. Then came a vision he could not bear: As real as the white sheet before his eyes he saw the corpse of his daughter, white as the sheet, the winding sheet, accusing, beautiful. Without finishing his prayer he got up from his knees and lay on the bed; it was still hot from the sweltering heat of the day, and he tossed about until a tormented sleep took away the curse of full consciousness.

For the next two days he went about in agony, looking only through habit for the sacred letterhead of Boynton & Rice. One letter came from his wife, then another. Both were non-committal. Then a third to say that they would be home the next day or the day after. The next day they did not come, and the doctor spent a night in Gethsemane; lying on a bed of pain he tossed and listed like a great ship in the storm of emotions that went on about him. The next day they came, Mrs. Dickey was very agreeable and very nice, and Marion looked frightened and still and a little pale. Tenderly he took Marion in his arms.

"I'm glad you're back, little girl," he said. "The heat will break in a day or so, and you'll feel better."

"I think so, Dad," she answered. Her look was one of grati-

tude, a strange, intimate gratitude, too sensitive to be conveyed by anything but the eye. "I'm feeling much better already."

Nothing more was ever said about that sudden visit in the heat of August, but the doctor's mind had seized upon a fixed idea, had fastened upon it with the grip of disease and had toyed with it fitfully at first and clutched at it madly at last. He knew with a terrible, relentless, maniacal certainty why his wife had so queerly taken his daughter away.

III

As the days of summer madness passed into the cooler days of Indian summer the doctor's spirits returned once more to take charge of his faculties. He smelled the approach of school like an old war horse and looked with pride upon all the preliminary arrangements for the reception of an unprecedented enrollment.

One clear September morning he called Dean Banks into his office.

"Dean," he began, "I have a rather disagreeable task for you to perform. I find that I cannot longer tolerate the presence of Mr. Harmon in the University."

Dean Banks looked at his superior incredulously; his mouth dropped open involuntarily, as if to assist his unreliable ears.

"Harmon?"

"Harmon."

"But, Doctor——" He seemed unable to know where to begin.

"Well?"

"What's he done?"

"Plenty. You know that. We have plenty to make a case against him."

"But he's been cleared on all those charges. We can't just tell him to get out."

"Why can't we?"

The dean fidgeted. "I just don't think we can, that's all."

The doctor gripped the arms of his chair firmly and thought great thoughts which beetled his brow. "Harmon's a very bad influence around here, Banks, and I'm going to get rid of him."

That closed the important part of the interview, which was

altogether inconclusive, but there were other interviews that day. Whether the dean tattled or just happened to pass a worried remark the doctor never knew, but Colonel Willingham was in his office less than ten minutes later. The business manager was fretted, and the joviality with which he began soon watered down into a thin civility. After his casual beginning, which he always used with the regularity and purpose of a diplomat, he inquired:

"What's this I hear about getting rid of Sphinx?"

"Who told you that?"

"I just heard."

"Banks tell you?"

"No. It wasn't Banks. There's nothing to it, of course?"

"There certainly is."

"But, Doctor, we can't do that. Why, hell, there wouldn't be a student left on this campus."

"I don't care if there wouldn't. Harmon is a dangerous moral influence around here, and I intend to get rid of him."

"What's the charge?" Willingham's eyes narrowed and he pinned the doctor with the question.

"No charge in particular just now. He's done plenty. You know that."

"Maybe he has. I don't know. But you can't get rid of him just on account of you don't like him, Doctor. You know that. What's somebody been tellin' you about him?"

"Nobody's been telling me anything, Colonel." The chancellor was fast getting annoyed. "Did I ask to consult you on this matter?"

The colonel paid no attention to the executive thrust. "I'll have to be consulted before anything's done about it. I got Sphinx here, and I'll have to know why he's leaving. Why, man, we're just on the verge of the best season we have ever had. That man Harmon is all we've got."

"I don't care," the doctor said doggedly. But he did care, and he did not know what to say next. The colonel would have stayed on indefinitely if someone else hadn't buzzed to be admitted. It was Coach Huddleston. He was Smilin' all right, but there was something on his mind. Willingham went on and left the two alone.

"Just happened to be in town for the mornin', Doctor," Smilin' Syd explained, somewhat embarrassed by the imposing atmosphere of the chancellor's office; he dropped into a chair across from the doctor's desk and hid his coaching togs behind mahogany. "And I thought I'd come in and see you."

"Glad you did," the doctor said with a look of sour determination.

Smilin' Syd examined the chancellor's inkwell rather carefully and went on. "I don't guess there's anything to it, but I heard the Discipline Committee was ridin' Sphinx again. 'Course, I can see their standpoint, and I don't blame 'em, but that Sphinx is a mighty fine player, and I'm countin' on him to the last game this year, you know."

"Yes, I know."

"You don't happen to know what they're after him for?"

"No, I don't. It might be any number of things, though."

"Well, you're not goin' to let 'em get away with it, are you?"

The doctor shifted uncomfortably from one huge hip to the other and gazed helplessly out the window. "It isn't a question of letting them get away with it, Huddleston. I certainly can't interfere with their work."

"You can't?" The coach looked at him with a mixture of incredulity and contempt. "You're chancellor of this school, aren't you?"

The doctor nodded wearily.

"Well," Smilin' Syd remarked, getting up and sounding very final, "I don't know what it's all about. You and I have been through some great fights around here, Doctor, and I appreciate all you have done for athletics. I don't know what the reason is now for your sudden change of heart, but all I've got to say is this: If Harmon goes, I go, too."

"But why?" The doctor was alarmed.

"Why? Why? You don't think I'm goin' to work my guts out to get a good team in shape, with the first chance of beatin' Tate and getting the Conference Championship we have ever had, and then let a damn Discipline Committee come along and kick it over, do you? I've coached the greatest teams in the South, and my coachin' days ain't over. I've got to win this year, and

I can't win without Harmon. And I'm not gonna be disgraced by havin' to trot out a team without him. And that's final."

"I'll see what can be done," the doctor said in helpless anger.

"You better," Smilin' Syd called back from the door. "If Harmon goes, I go too."

The doctor gathered strength to say, "You might have a hard time getting another job this time of year."

"Yeah? Say, I can get any job I want. Don't let that console you. But if you can Harmon you'll have one hell of a time gettin' any more players."

"I don't care if I never get any more."

"No? You can talk mighty big now. But wait a year or two and see how you feel. You get rid of the team you've got now and then see what kind of a college president you make." With that he left, closing the door with sufficient force to let the chancellor believe he had slammed it if he wanted to.

That noon the local Maverick Alumni Club held its regular monthly luncheon. When it learned of the threatened dismissal of Sphinx Harmon, it spent the rest of the time passing resolutions. These got into the press; they called upon the chancellor to protect the good name of the university.

That afternoon Mr. Hawk drove out to see the chancellor.

"Dickey," he began, "I hear Sphinx is in trouble again."

"Not that I know of," the doctor replied, fingering in an off-hand way the top drawer of his desk.

"Well, I'm mighty glad he isn't," Mr. Hawk went on. "I don't know of anything I'd hate to see worse. The rumor's got out, though. Tate started it, I guess. Anyway, you'd better do something to stop it. Nothing would cause more scandal right now, you know."

"Scandal? How's that?"

"Think of what Sphinx could tell. And think what Huddleston could tell. He'd say he resigned because he found us corrupt. That would put us in a pretty pickle."

"I don't think there's any danger of that," the doctor said casually, but his eyes were big.

"Danger? That's exactly what would happen. You better do something about it right away. Sure you had," Mr. Hawk added when the chancellor failed to move.

"What can I do?"

"Issue a statement. Say there's nothing to it."

For three full minutes the chancellor sat steadfastly unmoved. Then he picked up a sheet of paper and wrote hurriedly on it, handing it to Mr. Hawk when he was through. Mr. Hawk read it with care and difficulty.

"That's not bad," he said generously. "I find there is no ground whatsoever for the rumor that Mr. Harmon is to be dismissed from the university.' That ought to silence them. You might add a word about thinking maybe it was Tate who started the rumor."

"That would be a little too pointed," the chancellor defended. "I think this will settle the question."

"Yes, I guess it will," Mr. Hawk agreed, after another glance at the statement. "It's too bad this thing got started right now, but I believe you can stop it before it goes any further. Harmon's a great man. There's no telling what he's worth to the school in dollars and cents. It would be a shame if anything happened to him right now at the height of his career. Funny how this thing got started," Mr. Hawk mused. "You don't happen to know, do you?"

"No," the doctor said, getting up like a man tired unto death, "I haven't the least idea."

THIRTY-NINE

IT WAS not until three days after the opening of the fall term that the doctor found the engraved letterhead of the firm of Boynton & Rice three from the top in the stack on his desk. His eye, trained for essentials, took in the letter as a whole, gaining the point of it with remarkable accuracy. He sighed, stood up, and read the letter carefully:

CHANCELLOR HORACE ETHELMORE DICKEY, D.D.,
Martha Sumner University,
City.

DEAR SIR:

Our distinguished client, Arthur King, authorizes us to advise you that the sum of three million dollars to be used in the erection of a memorial hall for service and utility on the campus of Martha Sumner University is now available for your purposes and will be shortly deposited to the credit of the trustees of your institution in the bank which you designate.

He authorizes us also to state that an additional million dollars, to be set aside as a special fund for purposes later to be determined, is also available.

Proper legal forms executing the transfers of these amounts will be duly drawn and submitted to you in the course of the next few months. It is understood and agreed that this is to be the first of a series of gifts of the Arthur King estate to the institution of which you are the head.

Very truly yours,
BOYNTON & RICE.
Attorneys.

In the face of a letter actually conveying so much cash to his enterprise the doctor noted with only passing concern the discrepancy between the amounts King had promised and those listed in the legal statement in his hands. He swaggered for a moment, grew quite giddy with delight, smiled at all the four walls of his office, and sat down to wallow in self-esteem. When Maizie came in to bring another batch of letters, she found him

jovial and kindly. He took the letters from her hand with a cordial, "Thank you, Maizie."

After she had gone out, he took his 'phone from the rack and told the university operator to get him Mr. Hawk's office. While she put through the call he leaned back like a baron and wiped tears of joy from beneath his big spectacles.

"This you, Hawk?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Hawk isn't in."

"Oh. When do you expect him?"

"He's out of the city and won't be back until next week."

"All right. Thank you."

"Not at all."

His spirits falling rapidly, he called for Colonel Willingham's office. A drawling voice answered, and when he asked for the colonel the same maddening, drawling voice said he had gone to the city. Sarabelle answered when he called his home and informed him that Mrs. Dickey had just left for the Browning Club. Dean Banks had gone to chapel.

He sank back in his chair to sulk in lonely triumph. There was no one to tell. He half started to inform Maizie, but the thought of her unresponsive face froze the impulse. There was nothing to do but to chaff and swear in permissible "darns" and "dings."

There was Judge Buck, his friend, but he found that curiously he did not want to tell Judge Buck. Why, he did not know. It seemed profane, perhaps, to tell the judge of a triumph so earthly. And yet he was his friend and would rejoice in anything he did. He rang the judge's office. It was several moments before there was an answer. Then a man's voice came onto the wire and, in response to the doctor's request, said: "Judge Buck is home ill to-day."

Then he remembered. The judge had broken rapidly during the summer. When last the doctor had seen him he looked none too well. It seemed strange for a man to be getting old at his age. . . .

II

Whatever difficulty the chancellor may have had in finding an ear for the first news of the Arthur King gift, he certainly had no trouble in getting a crowd in the end. Colonel Willingham

was never more the director of public relations than he was when he got wind of the King donation. He sent out enough news to fill a Sunday issue of the *New York Times*, and though the doctor was a bit chary of making such ado he was quickly satisfied when he saw the clippings come pouring in. After all, he had been patient during the long, suffocating dog days of August; he had behaved shrewdly, not even telling Virginia what had occurred, and it was time he enjoyed himself. It did not particularly matter that the colonel's releases exaggerated. The point was news, news, news, and the world woke up to the resounding fact that Martha Sumner University, under the direction of Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey, had a future comparable to none other in the South.

As for the local papers, the very headlines would have made a column in six point. The *Press*, true to its scandalous form, shouted

DICKEY GETS HIS MILLIONS

and went on to say in a voice only several points subdued:

ENTIRE ARTHUR KING ESTATE
WILL GO TO BUILDINGS AND
ENDOWMENT OF MARTHA SUMNER

It carried, on its special pictorial page, a very informal photograph of Dr. Dickey taken as he was hurrying along the campus of the university, his coat-tails flopping like bunting in the wind. There was also another informal photograph of the doctor shaking hands with King's attorneys in front of the Rig Trust and Savings Bank.

In the rotogravure section of the more respectable *News* there were portraits of the chancellor and the university's benefactor side by side, the doctor looking very determined and triumphant, and Mr. King glaring with watery eyes into the mouth of the camera. It was the first picture of the oil magnate that had appeared in years, and it bore, in the minds of the sensitively patriotic citizens of the section, a rather striking likeness to the later pictures of Mr. Rockefeller.

If there was an angle from which the story of the gift was not

written up Colonel Willingham and the professor of journalism never thought of it. There was a human interest story on:

KING ATTRACTED BY
RADIO ADDRESS OF
CHANCELLOR DICKEY

It began:

Last June a lonely millionaire, one of the most powerful of America, sat "listening-in" on his radio among the splendid appointments of his home. He picked up this station and that, until, after a time, he got Station WMGB, the *Oil City News*, which just then was presenting the annual address of Chancellor Horace Ethelmore Dickey of Martha Sumner University.

Adjusting the ear-pieces, the millionaire began to listen intently . . .

It leaked out a few paragraphs farther on that the millionaire was none other than Arthur King, and that it was his impression of the doctor's speech that started him to thinking of the huge gift he would make to the university.

There was a feature story of the sainted Martha Sumner and her consumptive husband, a story recalling other high-spirited benefactors, among them the demented Effie Graham, and a fine biographical sketch of Chancellor Dickey, recounting his deeds, financial and righteous, from the time he left the seminary until the time of his triumphant harpooning of Arthur King.

And while the public was recalling benefactors it had no occasion to forget the exalted services of young Theodore King. There were stories on Teddy, most of them to the effect that a little child shall lead them, and along with these there was mention aplenty of the alumni who had contributed so generously to the building of the King War Memorial Stadium.

During the long summer the structure of the stadium had risen to completion in a commanding position on the Martha Sumner campus. First it had resembled the skeleton of a resurrected dinosaur; then in the moonlight of August it had looked like the ruins of an ancient coliseum. Double shifts were rushed in by the contractor, and the men worked like beavers as the time for the first game came threateningly near. Then in the first days of

the fall the scaffolding peeled off like old scales, and there it stood in all its pagan grandeur—the King War Memorial Stadium, bigger than any other three buildings on the campus.

There was nothing to do, of course, but to dedicate the temple to Diana with high aplomb. A brigadier general stationed at Fort Sill was invited, expenses paid, to be present and receive the gift on behalf of the shades of those departed veterans in whose honor it was erected. On a rickety speakers' stand draped in university colors and built just beneath the fancy goal posts at the west end of the field, the dignitaries of the community stood and made the great transaction while the sun of a September afternoon fell upon the bared heads of pagan worshippers.

Theodore King, in a high, frightened voice, made his part of the donation. Colonel Willingham, clad in the uniform of a reserve officer, made the gift for the alumni. Everyone present was mystified and disappointed, and the cheering was very mild after each speech. The brigadier general was a gruff old walrus, and he accepted the gift as casually as if it had been a mere division of men to be slaughtered. The occasion reached impressive heights only when at the very last the band played "Dear Old Martha Sumner U." The last measures echoed back and forth across the stadium and then dissolved into a moment of vast stillness. Most of those present cried a little and then went home, feeling foolish.

III

But that was only the formal dedication. The real dedication occurred again and again that fall as the gaily bedecked Mavericks, giddy over their new pasture, sported and gamboled past everything that came in sight. They kicked the doughty Tigers from Missouri into a 38 to 0 defeat and the same Tigers a week later held Nebraska's Cornhuskers to a 7-7 tie, and still another week later, while the Mavericks were running wild through the Arkansas Hogs, Nebraska beat Carnegie Tech, and Oil City figured, with a curious admixture of reasoning, mathematics, and patriotism that Martha Sumner had beaten Carnegie. What was more, the Mavericks amassed six points more against the Texas Longhorns than Tate amassed, and for the first time in

years it looked beautifully as if Martha Sumner would win from her ancient rivals. It looked like it, and it felt like it. There was the smell of victory in the very air that hung over the buildings of the campus. And when, after a formal conference, it was finally agreed that the game this year should be played at Oil City in the new King War Memorial Stadium, everyone knew that the gods had spoken. Precedent was smashed, and though the change of venue was actually made for gate receipts, the undergraduates and alumni thought it was Providence.

The day of the Big Game dawned clear and cool as steel. The sky seemed incapable of clouds. By sunrise the city had begun to stir and rustle with activity as the two rival camps manoeuvred into position for Armageddon. At ten o'clock long queues of men with colors on their arms stood under the cloisters of the stadium and waited for the ticket offices to open. The crowd increased with the passing of each minute; fights began when aggressive individuals crowded forward, and as the combatants stepped out of line to have at each other, still more aggressive persons took their places. Here and there along the campus walked members of the band or an occasional member of the Maverick Club, already dressed in loud regalia for the fray. Alumni, feeling privileged, sped through the campus drives in their Cadillacs or blustered into the business office in a last-minute effort to get more and better seats.

Even before he realized the reason for it the doctor was conscious of a pleasant tingling in his chest when he awoke that morning. It was that rigid feeling every normal boy experiences when he wakes up and suddenly remembers that the circus is in town. To-day was a holiday, and all the chores would either be neglected or hurriedly done. After breakfast the doctor tried to read, but his mind refused to follow the dancing letters across the page. He was restive and pottered around the library like an old woman. Try as he would to still the voices of excitement in him, they gibbered all the more. It was as though the very air of the room were highly charged with an electric current. At last he picked up the morning paper and found to his delight that he could follow without wavering the prophecies on the game.

The colonel and his wife returned from the Alumni luncheon with him. Marion had arranged to go to the stadium with some of

her frat sisters. She was exceedingly pretty that day, the doctor thought, and he would have liked to suggest that she sit with the old folks. He felt just the least bit lonely as she went off, but Colonel Willingham was booming and Mrs. Willingham was gurgling and Virginia was stirring around, so that he had no time to be quietly emotional.

"We might as well walk, Doc," the colonel said with daring familiarity. "You couldn't get any closer to the stadium in the car."

Cars were parked for blocks around, and the press at the gates, when they finally reached them, was madding. Freshmen in loud green caps jostled the chancellor and his party. Everyone was strangely good-natured, and no one seemed to mind the ill-mannered freshmen. The doctor saw no one he knew, but he felt on very friendly and intimate terms with all he saw.

There were pimply bookkeepers with decorated stenographers, impressive clubmen with striking wives, growling loafers with frilled and embossed lady companions; there were young men whom the doctor judged to be ministerial students by the ill-kempt nature of their dress and the meek look in their eyes; there were dashing co-eds with mischief in their faces, nudging each other and pointing to good-looking men in their vicinity; there was a great and glorious democracy of folks. Here was the heart of America, all united and all eager, and the thing that had brought them together was the contest between Martha Sumner and Tate. Football was the leaven in the lump of democracy.

A box on the fifty-yard line was reserved for the presidential party. They reached it before either team had appeared, and the cheer leaders, anxious for something to do, saw them enter. It was the signal for a great ovation. Seizing their megaphones, the leader shouted:

"Aa-a-a-all right, gang. Le's have nine for Prexy!"

He tossed his megaphone aside and jumped acrobatically into position. The students were busy finding seats in the Martha Sumner cheering section, and nothing happened when the leader pulled the trigger which was supposed to release a yell. Undismayed he picked up his horn and shouted again. This time the Maverick Club caught the cue, and there were nine staccato rahs

for Prexy! Prex! Prexy! The doctor smiled and waved his hand in the direction of the leaders and the cheering section. It was delightful to be the object of the cheers of such fine young men and women. Here and here only in the midst of their sport did he feel a part of them; he felt welcome, an intimate and confidant of those splendid boys and girls. He settled back contentedly in his uncomfortable chair and smiled to himself at the blue, warm sky. He was meeting student life on its own terms, and he was supremely happy.

They started a cheer for Willy but only six of the nine "rahs" were out of the students' throats when, out of a hole in a far corner of the Stadium, big Swede Borgson lumbered with the ball, and following him like rats from a burning house dashed fifty Mavericks, their crimson helmets glistening in the sun, and their dark blankets trailing gracefully in the wind. The last three "rahs" of the organized yell were lost in the pandemonium that followed. Half the Stadium rose and cheered madly. Bells rang and whistles blew. The doctor rose and doffed his hat. He felt a tingling as of electricity at the base of his spine. A feeling of awe and wonder and excitement stole over him and for a moment paralyzed him.

Up the field the Mavericks came. Twenty-two men tossed their blankets on the sideline beneath the doctor's box, and two squads formed to limber up. All of them were prancing like fine stallions, and even the substitutes on the lines turned their arms like Dutch windmills, and when they sat down it was nervously and impatiently; one could see them long for the game to start and for their time to come.

"What number is Sphinx?" Mrs. Willingham asked.

"No. 32, my dear. I have told you a hundred times," the colonel replied with a man's fine contempt for a woman at the game. "Tommy Orr is 41."

The doctor singled out 32. He was a huge man—dressed as a boy even, he was huge. Yet there was a certain primitive agility and grace about him that made the doctor feel very awkward. Simeon Hawk and his fat little wife joined them in the box, but no one paid any attention to anyone else. The spectacle consumed attention.

"Tommy looks good to-day," Willingham shouted in the doc-

tor's ear, but his last word was lost as fifty Silver Foxes emptied out of another hole in the Stadium base, and the stands across the field rose and swelled their great ovation. To the doctor it seemed that the Tate crowd had the better of the noise until the colonel explained that the Martha Sumner cheering sounded just as good or better over there.

The crowd settled down now to study the two teams. The Tate crew was attired in silver-gray jerseys and bright blue helmets. Their stockings, too, were blue, and the rest of their costume was so somber that one got the impression only of legs, legs, legs. To the doctor they seemed a trifle bigger than the team of his own school.

"Which one is Youngblood, that Indian?" he asked Willingham.

The colonel consulted his programme. "Number 12," he said. "That's the man they've got to watch."

Big Chief Youngblood, the doctor noticed, was more slender than Sphinx. He seemed lithe and sinewy, though, and the doctor could imagine his muscles rippling beneath his heavy togs.

The band struck up "She'll Be Loaded With Peruna," and the Martha Sumner cheering section rose in a mighty cheer. The music ran through the crowd like some elixir, and even the team took on new life. The Tate band answered with a hymn as dear to the cohorts of old Tate, and there was an answering roar from the stands across the field. The teams called off their signal practice and fell to kicking and tossing the ball about.

Big Chief Youngblood stuck his toe into the ball and heaved it fifty yards. Sphinx gritted his teeth and lambasted the pigskin; it towered into the air, glistened like a shiny bird in the afternoon sun, and descended slowly and tantalizingly; seventy yards. A roar of approval went up from the Martha Sumner stands.

Then at last the field was cleared. Two captains stood chatting with the referee in the middle of the field, and two hostile groups of players stood bent over on either bench to receive final instructions from their coach. A whistle bleated, and with the corporate growl of two cheering sections both teams trotted into position. Martha Sumner was to receive. It all happened very quickly, and before the doctor knew it the Martha Sumner crowd was standing and singing, as the custom was, "Dear Old Martha

Sumner U." He joined lustily in the song, but his eyes, like thousands of other eyes, were fastened on the field. A great detonation shook the stadium as Big Chief Youngblood landed on the ball and sent it whirling through the air into the arms of Tommy Orr.

IV

What followed must be told in a spirit of breathless romance. No one, with the possible exception of two cold, scientific coaches who squatted on the sidelines, saw that game with any semblance of realism or detachment. It was a battle of gods played upon a stage set by mortals, lighted by rays of imagination and covered by a sheen of grandeur.

Tommy caught the ball standing on his own ten-yard line; tucking it beneath his arm he dropped behind his interference and started a drive toward the Tate goal. Ten yards he went, and twenty; he swerved to avoid a vicious Tate tackler, seemed actually to duck under two others who were waiting low for him; thirty yards he went, and when he was finally down he was on the fifty-yard line.

It was too good to be true. Here at last Martha Sumner would have revenge. The next play was an off-tackle slant. Sphinx had the ball. He bowled over the first man who tried to stop him, eluded the man backing up the line, whirled, and was headed for the goal. He went twenty yards before the safety and the short safety fell upon him and downed him. On the next play Tommy Orr circled end on a lateral pass play and ran the remaining thirty yards for a touchdown. It was over in the twinkling of an eye, and the doctor could not have believed it had it not been for the mad yelling that went on behind him. He too was excited, and he clutched the banister in front of him so hard that he drove splinters into his hand.

Willingly the chancellor turned loose of the straw of dignity and sank into the turbulent sea of noise. He was gloriously, divinely conscious of having lost his identity, and it all seemed a rich, ecstatic, mystical experience. He was gathered up into the Seventh Heaven of delight. He pounded Willingham on the back and turned to see that hundreds of other men were pound-

ing each other on the back. Men and women were embracing, and a sort of frenzy, almost religious in its force and power, swept through the crowd behind him like a strong wind, tearing hats off and hurling them into the air, rocking men and women to and fro, reeling that huge mass as though they were so many straws. The Mavericks kicked for the extra point, made it, and the frenzy broke out again.

But Tate was about to receive. Sphinx kicked. The ball soared into the air and the crowd roared all the louder. A timid back received it and had taken scarcely ten steps when two driving ends smashed into him and piled him in a sickly heap on the soft green turf. An end run failed. Big Chief Youngblood drove at the line, careened through, but ran smack into the solid buttress of the mighty Sphinx and collapsed. An off-tackle slant was a farce, and Youngblood walked far behind the line and stood in the shadow of his own goal posts to punt.

The crowd behind the doctor howled in glee. Men asked each other questions and did not wait for an answer. "Paper team, uh?" "Look at that Tate coach now." "Didja ever see such a line?" The ball snapped and floated back to the Big Chief, and with it came the driving Maverick ends; they were on the huge Indian before he could brace himself; to kick was impossible; he fainted; darted to one side, looked about bewildered for the slightest part of a second, then broke into a long circling run. One man missed him; another tried a flying tackle but only touched his heel. The field before him had been scattered for a punt, and the fleet warrior stepped off twenty yards before he met a man. Without slacking his speed a step he squirmed and left a tackler sprawling ridiculously in his wake.

A hush of death fell over the Martha Sumner section, but the noise was not missed, for as though issuing from the earth with a terrible explosion came the bellow of the Tate crowd. The Big Chief was off, all his Indian blood coursing at full speed through his veins. He ran like a frightened deer before a huntsman's rifle. But, look! No. 32 was on him. A great form hurtled through the air as though it had been catapulted out of some giant machine. Its tentacles fastened around the flying Indian, and the next second the two of them were lying in a twisted heap of wreckage on the ground.

Both hostile camps were screaming and pleading now. The Chief had carried the ball into Martha Sumner territory and the Mavericks found themselves on a dangerous defensive. On the next play a pudgy little back broke through the line and when he fell under the powerful force of the Sphinx's tackle he had made a first down. The ball was on the twenty-eight yard line. A thousand business men were apoplectic and a thousand pipes had dropped from the mouths of alumni throughout the country as the radio operator announced the position of the ball.

Sphinx pranced up and down behind the line slapping the men in front of him on the rumps and shouting encouragement. Little Tommy Orr crouched grimly under his own goal post, looking very pathetic and very small in so great a situation. The next play was on, and the redoubtable Sphinx smeared it, but only after five yards had been gained. And then, before the Mavericks had assembled their defense, the Big Chief was off again; this time he was circling end, and something in his stride, something in his gait and manner, told the thousands who watched that he was gone. Perfect interference escorted him; he dodged cleverly one man who had slipped through and, running with the traditional speed of his race, skirted the entire field and slipped the ball over the last white line. Not a man had touched him; Sphinx raved and little Tommy Orr stood cursing and wringing his hands in despair.

Tate missed goal, and it would not have been so bad for the Mavericks if it had not been for what happened the middle of the last quarter. Martha Sumner started a steady drive to the goal and worked the ball halfway down the field. Then someone fumbled; it was impossible to tell just who it was, but someone fumbled, and the ever-present Indian gathered up the ball before the stands even discovered that there had been a fumble and, head high, raced across for another touchdown.

That was too much. The Mavericks were trailing 13 to 7. Smil-in' Syd rushed in fresh men, and the cheer leaders pleaded for cheers. The Mavericks received again and began their steady drive. But the time was growing short. All afternoon the two armies of giants had battled, and no one had been able to score save on some slip or twist of fortune. Five times the Mavericks pounded at the gates of the city, but each time they had been re-

pulsed. And now in the last moments of the last quarter they were trailing and the goal was sixty yards away.

Time hurried on, relentless. Sphinx was in marvelous shape, but he was bottled constantly. Tommy Orr was dazed, and he could not gain against his heavy opponents. On the fourth down the Mavericks had four yards to go, and Tommy threw a pass. The ball went wild and there was no Maverick to receive it. Out of the gathering dusk flashed the gray form of Big Chief Youngblood; reaching as though in pursuit of a frightened bird he clutched the ball in his hand, gathered it affectionately to his bosom, and darted for the goal.

It has never been decided just what happened next. The whole play will be discussed until Doomsday in athletic, business, and alumni clubs. Some contend that the Sphinx was ten yards in front of the Chief when he started his run. Others say that he had gone down to take the pass and was ten yards behind. Whatever the case, the Chief had a clear field when he intercepted that pass. Until he got within ten yards of the Maverick goal there was no one close to him. Then from nowhere, running like a madman pursued by a ghost, came the Terrible Tut. He laid his hand in the heel of that Indian as it stepped across the fifteen-yard line and there are those who claim they heard the brave's "Ugh!" of surprise and chagrin above the roar of the stands.

There were but three minutes left to play. Desperately the Foxes hammered and played the Maverick defense, but they gained but five yards in three downs. On every play the Sphinx became an ancient mass of stone animated with electricity. He was here and everywhere. Then on the fourth down the Foxes spread their formation.

"What are they going to do?" the doctor asked breathlessly and just as eagerly as though he expected Willingham to know.

"Don't know," the colonel grunted. "They may do anything. May fake a pass, or pass, or try a field goal."

The Big Chief walked behind the line and stood what seemed an epoch before he opened his hands for the ball. The Maverick line charged with a fervor that made Pickett's charge at Gettysburg seem a retreat. They emptied through and over the line like barbarians into a cathedral. The Chief, guarded by two men, ran to one side and back. In a moment two Mavericks were crowd-

ing him and three others pressing hard upon their heels. For a second it looked as though he would run, but there was only one thing for him to do: he ducked and threw the ball across the line.

The whole Maverick defense was confused, and the ball shot straight in the direction of a waiting Tate end. Near him, though, hovered the huge bulk of the Sphinx. And when the ball had all but settled into the receiver's arms the Sphinx reached his great hands into the air and batted it to the ground with such force that it bounced as high as the upright of the goal post.

It was the Mavericks' ball on their own twenty-yard line. They were trailing by six points, and two minutes later their grandest chance to defeat the Silver Foxes would be gone. With one of its growls of impatience the crowd watched them huddle, then hepped into formation; the ball sailed back into the hands of the over-eager Tommy Orr; it trembled perilously on his finger tips for a moment, skirted off, and rolled in the direction of the goal. Madly he turned to recover, but the charging ends of Tate were upon him, and they nailed him to the ground less than five yards from his own line.

The cheer which rose from Tate now was insulting. On the Martha Sumner side the crowd sank back and hung its head. Only a few loyal rooters pleaded; the rest had turned savagely inward. They would never support a team like that; they would never worship a God who allowed things like that to happen.

There was nothing to do but to kick. That was obvious. The Mavericks huddled and once more hepped into formation. Sphinx would kick, and when he did he would kick away the last chance the Mavericks would ever have to trample Tate.

But Sphinx didn't kick. He held the ball before him for a single second as if to punt it, then tucked it under his arm and, with three maniacs for interference, started his classic run to the Tate line. Eight times he appeared to be nailed, but eight times he eluded the grappling hooks thrown at him. Gradually it dawned on the players and upon the throng that the mighty Sphinx was superhuman, and at last he broke into a dead run for the last white marker. The tired Chief ran blindly after him, but he never got within ten yards of the flying Sphinx.

The noise of the earlier afternoon seemed but the murmur of

zephyrs compared to what broke loose when Sphinx crossed the decisive line and touched the ball gently, casually, to the earth. There doubtless would have been fatalities in the stands if that run had meant immediate victory. But there was a goal yet to be kicked and the great crowd sighed once more into rapt and febrile silence. When the ball sailed squarely between the posts madness split the heavens again, but that moment of rest between destined and complete triumph saved the insurance companies at least a hundred thousand dollars.

A few moments later the game ended in a 14 to 13 victory over Tate, and twenty-five thousand persons out for an afternoon of relaxation emptied out of the pan where they had sizzled all afternoon. Every mother's son of them grasped for breath. On the field stalwart men cried like babies in the ecstasy of victory or in the slough of defeat, and sank into pathetic heaps on the welcome softness of the earth until undergraduates tumbled from the stands to carry them off on their shoulders.

Dazed, the doctor turned to his party. The colonel bellowed hoarsely in his joy, and the others around the doctor wore a smile like a mask. It was all over now—the one grand event toward which the whole creation had cavorted. The doctor found to his surprise that he was stiff and weak and that his heart was pounding loudly and irregularly. It was as though he had suddenly reached the end of the world. The Judgment Day had been magnificent to see, but it was over now, and nothing remained but to await the beginning of an endless eternity. . . .

AND you see, this is to be a huge foyer with a statue to the coyote *there*, and a mustang done in bronze over here."

A dapper young architect laid his manicured nail on a meaningless blueprint, and the doctor reared back in his chair and nodded solemnly. "I understand," he said, and his voice was like the movietone of a later day. "If Mr. King approves the plans they are perfectly agreeable to me, young man."

"Oh, certainly, certainly. But I thought you would be interested." His tone implied offense that his art should be so cavalierly dismissed. "Then over here, you see, is to be a museum of the plains, a collection of frontier implements. I have worked out a bully design for that, sir, a bully one. Perhaps you'd care to see it."

"I'm sorry to say I wouldn't. As soon as the plans are ready I'm prepared to begin construction."

"Very well." The young architect began rolling up his blueprints; he seemed to be saying a great many things to himself. He placed a rubber band around the roll and made a popping noise over one of the ends with his hand. "I'm glad you like it so well, sir; everything will be in readiness within a few days. If that's all, I'll be going now."

He turned and walked toward the door, saying "Good-bye" as he went, but the chancellor sat immobile at his desk. The door closed, and the room was deathly quiet, save for the rattle of rain against the windows. Gradually the eyes of the educator fixed themselves on an indefinite point in limitless space before him; he seemed to be looking out into vast areas of eternity, transfixed, oblivious of everything but that one indefinite point. It was as though some vision of horror had caught his attention and fastened it in a vise: that massive head which had so often shaken in swaggering determination had suddenly gone rigid, and those eyes which had searched the souls of penitents were now searching impotently, hopelessly, for something out yonder that would never come. The face of the statesman had become

the face of a frightened, beaten man—the death mask of his soul.

Without moving his eyes, the doctor let his hand steal to a paper on his desk. It was a legal-looking paper, and he thumbed its pages absently for a moment. Then, as though unconscious of what he did, he pulled the paper to the center of the desk and, his eyes still fixed on the desert of eternity, he began turning the pages slowly, feeling each with his fingers as he turned and letting his hand run down over the typing like a blind man. Suddenly resolved, he pulled his gaze from the indefinite point before him and, adjusting his glasses, he looked at the document with a quaint admixture of hope and futility.

Then his head shook and his body trembled in an ague of despair. Muttering to himself, he read the tell-tale passage once more:

VII. It is also understood and herein agreed that the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) is to be conveyed and transferred from the holdings and estate of the donor, Arthur King, to the holdings and estate of Martha Sumner University, for the purposes of the endowment of the King School of Jurisprudence, providing as hereinafter stated that the administration of this fund shall repose in the hands of a special board of trustees to be named by the donor, which trustees shall, after they are named, be under the direction of the regular administration of the university and shall be responsible to him for their actions.

Believing that the training of young men and women in the pursuits of the legal profession is one of the greatest needs of modern education, and believing also that adequate funds must be provided for this training, the donor herein referred to makes this conveyance and transfer.

It is to be understood that the acceptance of the items referred to in the foregoing sections of this document by the Board of Regents of the university shall be tantamount to the acceptance of the gift and conditions thereto laid down in Article VII. . . .

When he had finished reading, the chancellor lifted himself with an obvious effort from his chair and turned to look out over the campus, where the wind and rain distorted everything. Out

to one side, just beyond the gymnasium, he saw a building rise from the earth as if by magic; it seemed to be compounded of a gelatinous substance, and it took form with the speed of time. On the front of it, carved in bas-relief, was the head of a coyote.

It was the head of Arthur King. He was living now in stone, having eternal life that way; he had gained the two purposes of his gift, the perpetuation of himself in stone and the humiliation of his enemy, Stephen Buck. And even in the madness of his last days he had spent three million on himself and a paltry million to gain the disgrace of the man who had incurred his hatred.

Like a man faced with death the doctor reviewed desperately the events which had led relentlessly to that moment. He had come to the university from Sinai, with a broad programme of educational reform written on tablets of marble; he had encountered disagreeable deans and a bedlam of professors who sought to knife him at every opportunity; his efforts to discipline them and put into execution his programme had been thwarted at every turn by a mischievous conspiracy of circumstance. Gradually he had come to realize that what the great section of which he was a part needed most was a towering school which would do for the South what Chicago did for the North; frantically he had labored to essemble the properties with which some successor might mold and work to high ends; he had spared no calorie in the vast reservoir of his energy; he had planned, he had spoken, he had pleaded, he had schemed, he had resorted to every device which seemed to him fair and proper. Yet all the while he realized the bootlessness of his quest for funds unless he could enlist the one man with unlimited resources for the building of a great university. First came the scent of Arthur King; vividly the doctor recalled the thrill of the chase he had felt the first day he had heard of the millionaire and had secretly determined that it was King who should become the school's benefactor. Then came Teddy King and the stadium, and at last the letter, and at long last the interview. After weeks of waiting came the confirmation: Arthur King had been landed and, of course, his first gift was but the prelude to his lavish generosity. With this conviction and with his cup running over from joy, the doctor had lost no time in getting the news to the papers and in gaining the

immediate acceptance of the Executive Committee. It meant that his day of triumph had burst in all its splendor.

Then came the legal-looking paper which now lay on his desk, and he saw everything. His friend, his one friend, Stephen Buck, was ruined and there was no assurance that Arthur King would give another cent.

The room had grown dark during his meditations, and he switched on the light on his desk. It threw a halo on the document before him and cast the rest of the office in shadows darker than before. Slowly and in desperate hope of misunderstanding it, he read again Article VII:

. . . for the purposes of the endowment of the King School of Jurisprudence, providing as hereinafter stated that the administration of this fund shall repose in the hands of a special board of trustees to be named by the donor, which trustees shall, after they are named, be under the direction of the regular administration of the university and shall be responsible to him for their actions. . . .

It sounded harmless enough; but so did most legal documents when read by amateurs. The clause about the King School of Jurisprudence could have but one purpose, and that was the retirement and humiliation of Stephen Buck. Impatiently the doctor rose and pressed the button which controlled the center light. It flooded the room in a pitiless, garish glare, and his eyes blinked guiltily. Suddenly he wanted very badly to have it off; a text flashed through his mind; men love the darkness because their deeds are evil; with strong resolution he left it on. . . .

In the full light he stood before the framed prospectus which hung upon the wall. He had stood there often before; he had made it a part of his ritual to stand there; something in its ugly splotches of color stirred him strangely, and many times he had seen the picture give way to reality, the streets fill with young men and women hurrying to classes, the trees wave ever so gently in the breeze. Each time a building had been added, either by the actual beginning of construction or by some gift which made it possible, he stood before the prospectus and marked that new edifice with his eye. To-night he looked just beyond the gymnasium and saw a building larger than all the rest; it grew

large as he looked, growing and swelling like a toy balloon, but preserving its form until it suddenly encompassed the grounds and swallowed up the other buildings; then it burst.

Well, it was not too late. Let the Executive Committee rescind their action. The thought stirred him with hope, but somewhere a voice answered, *They would never do it. Buck is only an ordinary lawyer after all. . . . Buck is my friend. . . . He isn't worth a new building and a million dollars. What if King does dominate the School of Law? He can hire a good staff and that's all that's necessary. . . . You have never had but one friend and that friend is Stephen Buck. . . . He's only a dean. . . . He's your friend.*

"He's my friend!" The doctor's voice had grown distinct by now, and the sound of it frightened him and brought him for a moment from the coma of despair. Then the voice from somewhere mocked again:

This may be the beginning of thirty million dollars. You'd be foolish to decline.

"Thirty million dollars." The doctor repeated the words stupidly.

Thirty million dollars! came the echo. Then, as though in answer to the echo, still another voice whispered:

Thirty pieces of silver.

You are an executive, the doctor told himself, but as he repeated the word he found that it had become *executioner*. *You must choose for the good of the institution. . . . What has Buck ever done for you? . . . I don't know. . . . You do know. What about the time he stood by you in legal battles? . . . He's a lawyer; why shouldn't he? . . . He's more than a lawyer; he's your friend. . . . Yes, yes, I know, but the time comes when a man must sacrifice even his friends. Jesus said he that hateth not even his mother . . . Buck is only your friend. You must not be sentimental. What is one man when the future of a great institution and the happiness of thousands are involved? Nothing. Yes, something. No, nothing.*

The doctor rose quickly as if to stop the maddening dialogue. His great frame shook as he stood in the ghastly light of the office. The light had changed color. It was going out, and his life was going out with it. He was not well. *You may die soon, your-*

self; better have something done to perpetuate your name, to serve your fellow man. . . .

With a fine working of his face he took the document from his desk and thrust it into the top drawer where his dictation for to-morrow lay. He must get away, must get with Virginia, with anybody, with Marion, with Stephen Buck. Virginia could not help; Marion would be gone. Where was she? He must see Stephen, his friend. Could he see him once more before he knew? He wanted to talk; he wanted to hear stories, stories of the plains where coyotes howled. . . .

With haste born of fear he threw his coat about his shoulders and turned out the light. Closing the door quickly behind him, he stepped into the corridor. It was dark there, save for the halo of light that fell upon the portrait of Martha Sumner. Reverently and with a sense of kinship he had not felt before, he paused before the picture. The eyes peered steadily at him; he thought he saw a twitch of jealousy in them, and he met their gaze defiantly. Glancing around to be sure he was alone, he stared for a full minute at the portrait, then walked rapidly to the outer door. The sound of his leather heels reverberated back and forth in the stillness of the hall, and as he paused with his hand on the knob, he thought he heard a whisper—did it come from Martha Sumner or from somewhere in the darkness?—

Thirty pieces of silver.

Trembling slightly, he clutched his coat about him and went out into the night.

THE END





